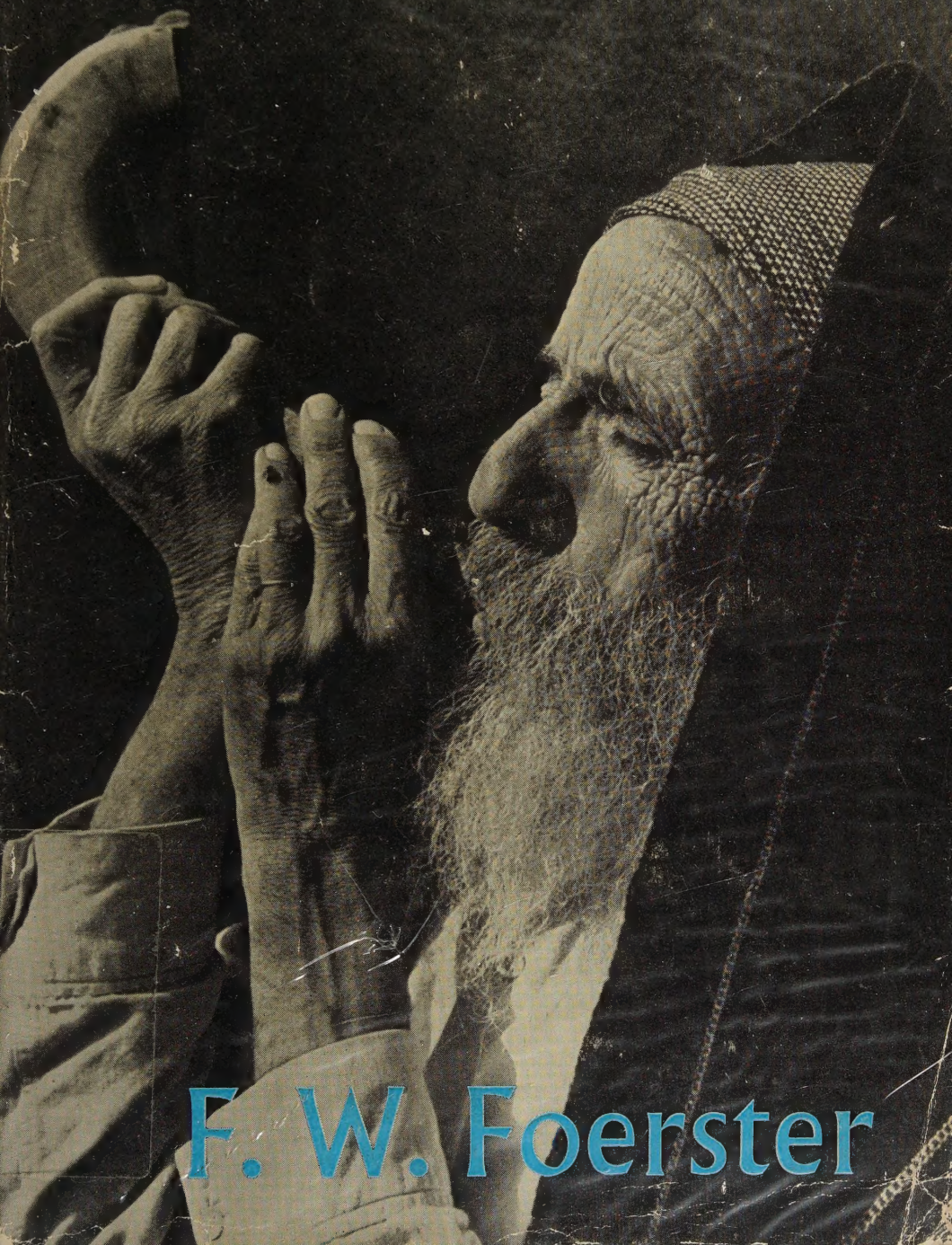


THE JEWS



F. W. Foerster

For many people the history of the Jews is an enigma they turn from with feelings of bewilderment, irritation—and guilt. And yet the civilization and morality of the West belong to a tradition that stems directly from Israel. This book examines both the enigma and the debt to the Jews and at the same time faces squarely the responsibility for the sufferings which the Jewish people have undergone—and still undergo—at the hands of non-Jews.

Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster, whose uncompromising resistance to all forms of tyranny and assaults on human dignity (*see back*) earned him the proud title of "*Gewissen einer Generation*"—"the conscience of a generation"—in his native Germany, seeks here to throw light on the majestic spiritual background of the Jewish past and the enduring qualities of what he calls "this mighty phenomenon".

He begins with a discussion of Israel's privileges as a chosen people, the "great misunderstanding" which led to so many centuries of hatred and distrust between Jews and Christians, and the tragedy of Israel which resulted in the dispersal of the Jews in the first centuries of our era throughout the known world from Spain to China.

The second part of the book traces the long martyr-ology of Israel from the destruction of the Temple by the Romans to the systematic slaughter of the Nazi *Einsatzgruppen*, discussing at the same time the irrational hostilities which characterize the social sickness of anti-semitism.

Professor Foerster then turns to the wellsprings of Jewish piety, the religion discernible in the Talmud, the Chassidic movement and the long line of great rabbis whose wisdom and example contributed so much to the survival of the Jews. Although he writes explicitly in gratitude to Judaism, Professor Foerster avoids the uncritical eulogy which is racial prejudice turned inside out and the result is thus a balanced and often moving tribute to a great people.

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THE JEWS

The Jews

by

FRIEDRICH WILHELM
FOERSTER

LONDON
HOLLIS & CARTER
1961

This translation of *Die jüdische Frage* (Verlag Herder KG, Freiburg im Breisgau) was made by

BRIAN BATTERSHAW

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Preface	vii
Introduction	ix

PART I: THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

1	Israel: Privileges and Tragedy	3
2	God's People	11
3	The Great Misunderstanding	21
4	Jerusalem and the Pagan World	33
5	A People without a Home	38

PART II: THE MARTYROLOGY OF ISRAEL

6	The Beginnings	53
7	The Inquisition	64
8	The Jew in Europe	75
9	Modern Times	84

PART III: JUDAISM AND THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

10	Christianity and Anti-Semitism	97
11	Jewish Piety	103
12	The Book of the Pious	117
13	Jewish Faults and their Causes	124
14	Aryans and Semites	138
	Conclusion	145
	Index	155

PREFACE

IT is not the author's intention that this book should enter into competition with any of the numerous historical, theological or political works that have dealt with the Jewish problem. He might indeed call his book a philosophy of the Jewish question or a metaphysic of the Old Testament, or, perhaps even more aptly, a biology of the Hebrew mystery in the midst of the political history of peoples. What he does here is twofold: first of all he seeks to throw a light on the majestic spiritual background of the Jewish past; but he also seeks to elucidate a matter of no lesser importance, namely the material and anthropological significance of that entry, that irruption of the heavenly world into the processes of ordinary life, and to make it intelligible in realistic terms.

What in fact the author is doing is to interpret in terms of the realities of life and of the basic characteristics of our human nature a mighty phenomenon that has already been dealt with by innumerable learned men from the point of view of theology, as also from that of exact historical science. He has applied to this task his own individual method, a method which recognizes the necessity of speaking to modern man in that realistic language which is the only one to which an uprooted generation will listen and the only one which it will take seriously.

The Germans have lived with the Jewish nation for a longer time than any other people, they have been more intimately connected with it than any other, they have worked alongside of it in closer unity and incurred towards it a heavier obligation.

That is why it is to the German people that this book is dedicated. Nevertheless the duty of coming to terms with the Jewish problem is one that devolves on all nations, and there is no nation that may refuse it. All must ask themselves what secret of Providence lies behind the fact that time and again, thanks to the mysterious and inexorable demands of a higher world, this particular people has been snatched out of the normal actualities of the historical process—in which other nations unceasingly and unquestioningly expend themselves—as though all pertaining to that process were a secondary matter that must give way before the claims of a super-historical reality.

The present book is nothing more than a modest token of personal gratitude for all that Christianity has received from Judaism; it is also an expression of a protest against the quite amazing ingratitude which all too great a part of non-Jewish humanity has displayed towards Jewry. May this work of mine be regarded as an attempt at spiritual reparation for the indescribable wrong suffered by the Jewish people, a wrong which must in any case sooner or later find its chronicler.

At the conclusion of this preface may I express my sincere thanks to Mrs Helen Mayer for the expert scrutiny and correction of my manuscripts which for years she has undertaken; it is a service that could never have been rendered without an exceptionally thorough knowledge of the German tongue and of the laws that govern German style.

New York, *February* 1959

FRIEDRICH WILHELM FOERSTER

INTRODUCTION

THROUGHOUT his long life the author has had exceptional opportunities of working with Jews, German, Slavonic and American. He has enjoyed relations of close friendship with them and shared with them in a community of cultural work. When therefore the anti-Semitism which broke out at the end of last century proved to be a phenomenon of cumulative intensity, he could only regard it as something that went utterly contrary to his own feelings—feelings of friendship for Jewry and of admiration for the ethical principles that guided Jewish life. It was thus impossible for him to stand idly by, as he witnessed the Nationalist crime committed against the Jewish people, and he resolved then and there to set against the whole anti-Semitic trend, both past and present, his explicit recognition of the incomparable value of Jewish spirit and genius.

Certain heroic Christians in Germany have indeed received just praise because they dared to offer open resistance to the National Socialist dictatorship. Yet what they attacked was often nothing more than Hitler's ecclesiastical policy; it was only rarely that they made his foreign policy the subject of criticism. In much the same way many Jews today seem to think that though they have a religious heritage to defend, that heritage is really nothing more than a purely spiritual tradition, a tradition whose only purpose is to remind men of the comforting reality of God in the midst of a world enslaved by materialism. It does not seem to occur to them—though the thing is more true today than it has ever been in the past—that they have a mission. It

does not occur to them that they are called to set a patrimony that has been thrust aside, into the very centre of their lives and of their political striving; yet it is only by means of this patrimony that they can do justice to this world mission of theirs. For their mission, is nothing less than to recall a humanity which has apostatized from its Creator's commandments, to that ethical testament which lays down the fundamental conditions for any real ordering of the things of this world.

With what incomparable *earnest* over a period of millennia the Jewish people accepted this divine obligation is made manifest by the moving examples contained in one section of this book; it is the section on Jewish martyrdom. This martyrdom began with the battle waged by the Maccabbees against the Greek invaders, it continued in the heroic resistance offered by Jews to Caesar's insistence on divine honours. Yet it was not till the eighth century that the essential epoch of Jewish martyrdom may truly be said to have dawned. It lasted till the close of the eighteenth—and even then the National Socialist epilogue from 1935 to 1945 was still to follow.

Is it not moving to contemplate how through all the vicissitudes of its fate the spiritual leaders of the Jewish nation continued unceasingly to instruct it concerning the nature of the vocation which had come to it from the highest of all realities? Is it possible not to be stirred by the manner in which those leaders burned it into its mind, judging, punishing and exalting it in turn? Again and again the truth is driven home: "You are called to a definite task by God. That is why the conditions of your life and the duties of that life are different from those of the other peoples of the world. You must understand the full depth of the spiritual conditions under which you are granted your physical health, are permitted to till your soil and beget your children. You must live from above or you cannot live at all." Unless we can see the Jews in such a light as this, we cannot penetrate to the fundamentals of the eternal problem of Israel at all. Indeed we cannot so much as even broach the subject.

PART I

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

I

Israel: Privileges and Tragedy

GREAT indeed is the debt which human civilization owes to the universal architecture of Roman law, and the debt to the formative power of Greek humanism and Greek humanity is not less. Yet who can deny that the spiritual foundation of our Christian civilization has its unique source of origin in the genius of Israel and in all the results, direct and indirect, of the manifestation of that genius here on earth.

I have begun this work by trying to measure the magnitude of civilization's debt to Israel and that is as good a way of beginning it as any I can conceive. Yet no attempt of mine to assess that debt can ever come near to doing justice to so mighty a theme. All that can be attempted here is a bare statement of the most essential facts, and the reason why this attempt is made is that at the very beginning of this book the whole nature and direction of my treatment of the Jewish problem should be made unequivocally plain.

In recent times a number of well-meaning Christians have come forward to urge on their co-religionists a just recognition of Israel's immeasurable deserts in preparing the way, ethically and spiritually, for the Christian message. Yet all too often such defenders of Jewry make their task too easy for themselves and seem to be insufficiently aware of the difficulties of their problem. Thus they say—to give but one example—"Was not Christ himself a Jew and was not his mother a Jewess?" Yet such an appraisal is far from measuring up to the greatness of the mystery. Providence let the Redeemer and his mother, that mother

who was so singularly blessed by the Holy Ghost, appear in the dusty garment of humanity and chose for this purpose the Jewish people because, by reason of the peculiar history of Israel, no other people had developed into so sensitive a receiving station for divine truth. The Jews had earned the privilege of having God's incarnation made visible amongst them, they had earned it a thousand times over. And this remains true despite the fact that, when it broke into the historical process as a living force, they did not understand and did not accept that mighty mystery.

For all that, we must never forget that Christ was infinitely more than the man Jesus, nor must Mary be simply spoken of as a Jewess. To speak thus is to do less than justice to the real essence of the matter, for Mary's body was merely the place where a divine secret lay concealed, and that secret extended far beyond the boundaries of mere race. This fact of course in no way lessens the importance of God's choice of the Jewish people as the source from which certain beings, called by Providence to be the servants of a supernatural and super-historical task, derived their human form.

In view of what has been said it seems natural enough that Jewish history, like a river flowing into the sea, should at length have mingled with the world of the supernatural itself and that the Psalms of David and the wisdom of Solomon should have been followed by him who declared "My kingdom is not of this world", by him whose purpose in coming was to make the visible world subject to the invisible. This last is a truth that—enslaved by the fallacy that man could claim the name of Christian and yet leave worldly things wholly within the care of the world itself—Christians in every age have all too often forgotten.

Once we become alive to this unique characteristic of Israel, we will see that all Jewish history is really "Holy History"—even though it bears terrifying testimony to the power of the unholy. For Jewish history is history in which the reality of the supernatural world is made more convincingly manifest than in any

other human chronicle. Again and again the Christian art of the Middle Ages felt itself driven to give profoundly moving expression to this fact. Enter any of the ancient Cathedrals! You will see the great men of Israel, and it is as if they were giving you their unspoken greeting. They look down upon you with a mien of lofty earnest as though they were guardians of a mystery by which they themselves were touched, a mystery which has awakened them and raised them into a world where there is neither Jew nor Greek nor Roman, where only the message of eternity speaks to man—"Unum est necessarium—one thing alone is necessary".

Long ago Samuel said to the Jews, "Obedience is better than burnt offerings." Such burnt offerings are all things which appertain to what we call culture or civilization, all things which ascend agreeably to heaven in clouds of smoke, be they named "literature, music, art", or be they simply the courtesies of civilized intercourse. Such burnt offerings, in a word, are all things that are part of the culture of the outer man. Admittedly these things involve a certain mastery of mere nature and aid man in his upward ascent; but they only do so if the *Unum est necessarium* keeps watch over them. Failing that, music becomes degenerate, literature worthless chatter and science mere propaganda for the nether world.

Above the portal of the great university in Cairo are written the words, "Chemistry is important, God is more important," and do we not see even today how one science after another is entering the service of our planned self-destruction? When we reflect upon this, is it not palpable that the lofty message of the prophets, and that greatest of all mysteries towards which they point, are something on an infinitely higher level than any cultural activity or any of the swindles perpetrated in the name of culture and education? Art can only concern itself with the marvels of creation and seek for those marvels the most exalted expression it can find. Yet close behind those marvels there lurk the horrors of creation which only wait for the moment when

they can put those marvels into horror's service. The good, in a word, can be hideously perverted and misused, and that is why—since he may fall a victim to such misuse—the so-called civilized man, the man of culture, is in much greater danger than the purely natural man. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Among the things to which these words refer there is also surely this peculiar danger to which civilized man is exposed.

Culture, then, needs spiritual guidance even more than nature unadorned, for unadorned nature comes straight from the Creator's hand. Such pristine nature has not been made drunk with self-glory nor has it gained therefrom any new surety of self; and now perhaps we can see why it is that the Old Testament is not concerned with any glory of the creature but with the Creator's glory alone. There our expectation is of an upward rising of man, not by reason of any lustre that he can shed upon himself but solely because of the light that shines upon him from above. It is in this that we see the difference between culture and the rule of God, and it is in this that the question what civilization owes to Israel can find its answer.

And yet, despite these great merits which have placed all of us so heavily in Israel's debt, the story of Israel is a tragedy. I do not use these words lightly but in a very precise sense. For wherein does the essence of a true tragedy reside? Surely not in any failure of pure intention or in the mere fact of some dread and irresolvable conflict; still less is it discovered in any form of mere catastrophe and collapse. No, we are only confronted by true tragedy when human greatness combines with mounting pride and, through the intoxication of success, turns to megalomania, to an impatient lack of all human regard and, in so doing, begins its alliance with the powers of the nether world. Men thus misled fall under the eternal judgements reserved for those spirits that fall away from the primal source of their being and lose their true selves so that they may triumph in the world of appearances and transient success.

Let me give a telling example of what I mean, an example that lies very close to home. As a result of a carefully prepared crime, a crime begotten with all the inevitability of a law of nature by blind power-madness, the people of Germany were hurled into a disaster that came near to being the ending of them. Yet the true German tragedy did not lie in that disaster at all. Rather should we seek it in the circumstance that intellectual greatness and a striving towards universality lost the compass bearing of eternity and placed themselves at the disposal of the darkest passions, even as Wotan went to Alberich and delivered up the greatest to the least.

Admittedly this is no more than the common human lot, which we can see at work in all ages and among all peoples. Yet there are certain culminating points in world history when—even as in the case of the individual—this common human lot, or common human character of ours, asserts itself with such overwhelming power of logic and of will, and in a spirit of such deliberate rebellion against the forces of morality, that such falling off of the great into the small, such collapse of Faustian striving into bloody guilt and into a companionship with cold iniquity, assumes a form so terrifying that the riddle of human destiny is suddenly made plain to us with a clarity that is altogether new.

Bearing in mind this idea of a world-historical interplay between guilt and destiny, between the narrow and the wide, between heaven and earth, let us again enquire as to the true nature of the tragedy of Jewry. That tragedy does not consist merely in the frightful fate by which the Jewish people has been visited throughout its historical life. Rather does it consist in its revolt against a divine plan of redemption which all the gifts, trials and favours that were made its portion were designed to serve. It consists in fact in Jewry's falling away from its spiritual mission and vocation, in its falling away into all the blindnesses, into all the ordinariness of the unspiritual world.

Ever and again the Jewish people took a false road; it sought to

imitate the insidious example of surrounding peoples; ever and again it threw up that example against its religious leaders; it would not recognize that such aping of alien things must always lead the Jew to disaster, precisely because—however much he might envy them—his nation was called into being for a purpose wholly different from that for which the neighbouring peoples were created. When those alien principles and institutions, whose aim was really purely political, were transplanted into the atmosphere of Jewish life, they immediately developed an overheated temperature, so that the whole Jewish nation became, as it were, politically red-hot. Ever and again the Jews succumbed to the temptation to spend themselves in the service of external success.

Now whosoever has been grasped by the absolute always finds it difficult to come to terms with the world of compromise, and this is why peoples that have a spiritual mission invariably suffer political shipwreck: they lack the realism that would enable them to recognize a false road in time and so they play politics in the accepted and subaltern sense of the word. They can only be saved if they can contrive to regulate their relations with the rest of the world in accordance with the highest moral principles—which was what Gandhi endeavoured to do, for, thanks to Gandhi, India sought to gain her freedom by other means than terrorist activity and, as a result, was able to crown her efforts with lasting and unmistakable success.

However we look at the matter, spiritual gifts are vouchsafed to such peoples as these, not—as some might suppose—so that, being removed from reality, they may pass their lives in a purer sphere, but so that they may solve problems that are wholly real by more exalted methods and thus guide other peoples to similar achievements. Yet instead of regarding their gifts as the sign of a vocation from heaven and solving earthly problems from a higher vantage point, namely from that of the world above, they all fall again and again into the temptation to apply these higher gifts to the finding of crude and short-sighted solutions.

We can see how natural and providential it was that a theo-

cratic nation like the Jews should have been placed under a religious as distinct from a political leadership. The great religious leaders knew this very well, and the greatness of Samuel consisted in precisely that knowledge. Samuel thoroughly understood that any mere "politicizing" of a religious people could spell mortal peril for that people's equilibrium, both political and spiritual. I have already indicated that people with great spiritual and intellectual endowment not only tend to be deficient in the realism needed if they are to see men and things as in politics they really are. But there is more to it than that, for as a result of the high tension within their souls, they run the risk of carrying a lofty passion and a supermundane fantasy into every worldly conflict.

The Jewish nation has produced the spiritual patrimony by which all human civilization lives. Jerusalem is, via Rome, the foundress of the West. She is also the foundress of America. Did not those ethical principles which created the American Commonwealth come in the last resort from out that city? A nation capable of such an achievement as this, an achievement that puts all else that has been accomplished upon this earth in thought, word or deed into the shade, could not possibly have played politics in the accepted sense of the term. In such a nation spiritual considerations could of course have their political consequences, but that would hardly be politics as the heathen understood the word.

Is it then to be wondered at that the founders of the Jewish theocracy did not give their people kings but judges to be their spiritual and moral leaders—men such as Samuel? These judges judged political exigencies as from above, though ultimately, after long resisting the passionate demands of the people, they were compelled to agree to the setting up of a king. In giving such consent, however, they did not hesitate to foretell what was bound to come of this. The lamentations of Jeremiah are indeed no more than a continuation of those of Samuel.

The tragedy in all this could in the long run not be gainsaid. In

the course of Jewish history it became ever more obvious; for the Jews never practised the cool realistic politics of the heathen—of which Mommsen's *History of Rome* furnishes sufficient examples—rather did they let themselves be governed by political passion which lacked all sense of reality and proportion. Indeed to such an extent were they carried away by this that the cautious Romans, who rarely let themselves be moved to mere acts of revenge, were aroused to what was for them a quite unique degree of exasperation and so completely destroyed Jerusalem that the Jews were dispersed in all directions. It was only after two thousand years of ceaseless wandering that they ventured to start returning to their original home.

Let us hope that as the Jews develop their new and yet so ancient home the old failings which I have just described will not once more reappear. Let us hope that an ever misplaced and ever disastrous confidence in naked political power, in political power that is uncorrected by the pursuit of the highest spiritual purpose—let us hope, I say, that such misguided confidence will not cause ancient ills to be tragically revived. For it would be tragic indeed—and more than tragic—if this time—and it would irrevocably be the last—such wonderful gifts and achievements were brought to nothing by a form of politics irreconcilable with Jewry's religious heritage, a heritage that contains the only true political realism that there is.

God's People

WHEREIN does Israel's incomparable spiritual greatness reside? It lies simply in this: that while other peoples were concerned with created things, the Jews were above all else concerned with the Creator. Where has the historiography of any other people done what is done in the Old Testament? Where at the end of a purely factual chronicle has any other nation let the prophets have their say, so that these may declare how the destiny of their people—nay, the destiny of the whole world—which otherwise would be tossed about without clear purpose, a plaything of apostasy, might consistently be placed under divine guidance by which alone man can be saved? Small wonder then that the idea of conscious and deliberate obedience to the law of God should theocratically dominate all Old Testament texts and that such texts should ever anew drive home the grounds for that obedience, the effect of this being that the existence of God is no longer regarded as some distant reality remote from the things of this world, but as the supreme surety for the well-being of all human life and the only means of ordering it securely!

It is not easy to do justice to that essentially religious conception of the world out of which the ten commandments speak to the Jew. Sinai is here no more than a symbol of the fact that all this is something more than one man speaking to another and spelling out the simple rules of social co-operation. No, behind the earthly order there stands the order of all orders, the order that holds heaven and earth together. The creature subjects itself

to the Creator and seeks in His name to effect man's spiritual mastery over himself and over the tyranny of his instincts.

All too many Christians who lift up their eyes to the star of Bethlehem fail to realize that the glad tidings did not come from the world of the stars alone, but also from the dark earth, from the blood-encrusted soil of more than a thousand years of history, in which an entire people dedicated itself to the worship of the one and only God, resolved to follow his commandments as the supreme rule of its earthly existence—and this though throughout that history that same people was frantically striving with inherited sin, though it was driven by a passionate desire for the goods of this world and though its chosen way was in mortal contradiction with its whole surroundings. Not till we realize all this do we appreciate the real inwardness of that famous Jewish prayer :

Create, O God, thy temple upon earth.
Everlasting God, create it presently,
Create it now.

Perhaps indeed the greatest thing in the religion of the Old Testament, the thing wherein we discern so essential a pattern of ultimate truth, is this: we find there not only a confession of the reality of another world, but above all the idea of an irruption of the divine world into human history and—by a sort of correspondence—a passionate desire to follow the divine will in the midst of this earthly life.

This interplay and intermingling of human and divine is of the very essence of the Jewish story. Indeed Christ himself did not fall into the Hebrew world like a meteor out of another order of reality, as something wholly alien to the spirit of Jewish history. No, his person is the culminating point of Israel's whole development. He was, as Aristotle would have said, its *Entelecheia*. He was the ultimate fulfilment of its world-historical message, even though the very logic of this brought him to the Cross. It was not arrogance that plunged the Jews into the great-

est crisis of their history but the sheer immensity of a mystery. Yet it was a mystery which, though they did not comprehend it, was actually a part of their own tradition, for it was the mystery which Isaiah had begun to reveal but which it was left to a Jew, to the man called Paul, to blaze forth in all its clarity.

All peoples have their peculiar gifts and it was given to the Jews to grasp the fundamental spiritual and moral principles that govern human life on earth. They have, in doing so, for all time united man's earthly lot with the divine spirit, and that was a thousand times more important than Greek art, Roman law, German science or French wit. There can be no question that Judaism was the world's supremely conscious centre of Monotheism. It thus became the religious foundation of all our Christian culture. Before the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed it defended that monotheism against all its polytheistic neighbours with a quite unique heroism. The strength of faith and character then displayed has communicated itself to all that moral inheritance which for millennia has held the Jews together.

There is a passage in Josephus which shows most clearly what manner of thing the Jewish past had thus prepared, and for what manner of thing it had laid the foundation. The passage describes two scenes which are perhaps the most superb in the whole of our human history. They are scenes which make the quality and vocation of the Jewish people plain for all to see, scenes which show that in this confused world the action of the Holy Ghost in Jewish history was as important a thing for the ultimate emergence of Christianity as was his descent upon the Virgin who is the centre of the Christian mystery.

Let me begin with the following incident, which occurred after Pilate had been made Procurator of Judaea under Tiberius. Josephus has this to tell about his early experiences in that office:

Pilate brought images of the Emperor* by night to Jerusalem,

*Small golden busts of the Emperor which were affixed to the tops of the standards.

with wrappings around them. This resulted, as soon as it was day, in a great uproar amongst the Jews. Whoever saw the standards was terrified because he could not but see in it a violation of the Sacred Law, for this Law most strictly forbade the bringing of any images into the city.* While Jerusalem was voicing its anger, the country folk began to stream into the city in large numbers, and men hurried to Pilate in Caesarea and besought him out of respect to the law of the land to remove the images out of the city. When Pilate refused the urgent request of the delegates, they threw themselves on the ground and remained lying there for five days and five nights without taking nourishment.

At the end of this time, Pilate seated himself in his Seat of Judgement in the great stadium, and summoned the people to attend, as though about to give them an answer. He had however secretly arranged a sign with his soldiers on the giving of which they were to surround the Jews with weapon in hand. Surrounded suddenly by three rows of armed men, the Jews were deeply disturbed by this unexpected sight, but Pilate now threatened to have them struck down unless they agreed to tolerate the presence of the Emperor's standards, and at that moment the soldiers were ordered to draw their swords. Immediately the Jews, as though they had previously agreed on such a course of action, threw themselves to the ground and cried out, "Rather would we suffer death than violate the Law." This pious fidelity astonished Pilate, so much so that he ordered these standards to be removed from Jerusalem.

* * *

*Thanks to the divinification of the emperors which was beginning about this time, these busts were now regarded as images of pagan gods, and this appeared to the Jews to be the most grievous form of idolatry. They were certainly erected in front of the Roman headquarters in the fortress near the Temple. In his building of the temple Herod had favoured a foreign style, had used inscriptions and even introduced a golden eagle, but he never went so far as to introduce anything in the nature of a statue or bust, though he had certainly done this in Caesarea and other pagan cities. It is therefore easy to understand that when in a time of strong theocratic reaction the Romans of all people transgressed this particular limit and so denied the most elementary respect to Jewish popular institutions and to the Jewish law, bitterness was very great indeed.

Tiberius' successor had been made so arrogant as a result of a number of pieces of good fortune, that he ordered his general Petronius to go to Jerusalem with an army and set up the Emperor's images in the Temple. If the Jews opposed his will, the most obstinate were to be killed and the others enslaved. God however prevented these orders from being carried out. Petronius marched on Jerusalem from the direction of Antioch with three legions and large numbers of auxiliaries. When he entered Judaea, and the news came that the army was already in Ptolemais, terror spread over the land. The Jews assembled together with their wives and children on the plain of Ptolemais and implored Petronius to spare their lives, and above all to respect their holy customs.

The legate, who was impressed by the large number of his petitioners and the earnestness of their prayers, halted his army in Ptolemais and, while he himself journeyed to Galilee, summoned the people and their most respected leaders to Tiberias. Here, dwelling upon the might of Rome and the threats of Caligula, he sought to persuade the Jews of the foolish nature of their request. All the peoples subject to Rome, he said, had set up the Emperor's image along with those of the other gods. If the Jews alone of all the peoples refused to be reconciled to this, then their obstinacy was not much better than open disaffection.

The Jews took their stand on their law and on the custom of their fathers which forbade the setting up of any image of God, let alone of a man, in the Temple or even at any ordinary place anywhere in the land. Petronius answered, "I must obey the orders of my master. If out of regard for you I disobey them, I shall bring ruin upon myself, and then not I but he who sent me and under whose orders I stand, will declare war upon you." Hereupon the whole multitude shouted, "We are prepared to suffer all things for the law."

After he had persuaded them to be quiet, Petronius asked again, "Do you then wish to fight against the Emperor?" To which the Jews answered, "For the Emperor and the people of Rome we bring sacrifices twice a day, but if he wishes to set up the images, he would have to slaughter the whole Jewish people. Gladly would they offer themselves as a sacrifice together with their wives and children." This unshakable piety and contempt of death filled

Petronius with astonishment and pity, and he went away without making a decision.

On the following day he first summoned the more distinguished of the Jews and then gathered the whole people together and sought to persuade them by warnings, reasonings, and threats. He described to them the might of Rome, the anger of the Emperor, and the painful embarrassment which he himself would suffer. When none of his representations bore any fruit, and when Petronius saw that the whole land was in grave danger because no seed would be sown, since for fifty days the whole people had been idle in the town at the time of the sowing, he summoned them again and said, "Very well, I myself will take the risk. If I succeed in softening the Emperor's heart, we will both of us rejoice in common over such deliverance. If I fall into disfavour, I will gladly sacrifice my own life for the sake of so many." Having thus assured them, he dismissed the multitude who overwhelmed him with their blessings.

Petronius marched away with his army and retired to Antioch. There he immediately wrote to Caius the Emperor, reported on his march into Jewish territory and on the passionate prayers of the Jews. He asked the Emperor to reflect and not to ruin both land and people but to leave their traditional laws inviolate, and urged him to revoke his order. When he received it, the Emperor refused to look favourably on the request, rather did he threaten Petronius with death for his dilatory execution of his imperial orders. However, it so happened that the messenger who brought this reply was delayed three months by storms, while other messengers who brought the news of Caius's death had prosperous voyages. As a result, Petronius received the last-named news twenty-seven days before he received the letter that threatened his death.

The following comment can be made on these two incidents. If the present author were asked to express within the compass of a few words wherein he thought lay the incomparable greatness of the Jewish people, if he were asked to show wherein they had deserved well of mankind for defending its spiritual goods, and in what sense something had irrupted into Jewish history which cannot be found in the history of any other nation, if he

were then asked to illustrate the willingness for sacrifice, the courage, and the superb greatness of character that resulted from this—if, I say, he were asked such questions as these, he would immediately recount the two connected incidents which have just been related. They are among the most moving, and most sublime things that have ever happened on this earth, and the spirit that was behind the attitude of the Jewish people in those distant days presents us with a spectacle so splendid that the eternal drama of human worthlessness can only stand beside it in humiliating contrast. Mighty deeds of valour have always been performed by men for their earthly fatherland. In this instance, however, an entire people is ready to sacrifice itself, its youth and its country, so that its fidelity to the unseen God may be preserved.

When I had read the two accounts of Josephus which I have just quoted, I was able to see, as from a wholly new vantage-point, that it was only among these people—among people who were so infinitely different from all the other peoples of the world—that the Redeemer of mankind could have been born. Surely there is a vast and inflexible logic that runs through the story of the Jewish spirit. That logic is evident from Abraham's willingness to offer his own son as a sacrifice, it is evident in the psalms of David, and in the testimony of the prophets. It is evident right up to the above described scene, in which an entire people declares its readiness to purchase, if necessary with its own life, the victor's respect for its religious tradition.

In reproducing these accounts from Josephus, I am, I suppose, giving the best possible answer to the misgivings of those who are unduly influenced by the element of the horrible in Jewish history, and who do not grasp that the very marvel and mystery of that history lies precisely in the fact that sacred history is here embedded in history that is profane, in those kind of happenings in fact that have occurred among all peoples at all times. All the rest of the world's history assumes complete separation between the things that are of God and those that

are of this world. In Jewish history alone does the divine life struggle unceasingly and inflexibly to become embodied in the midst of human reality—a thing that might itself be called a kind of incarnation. I say this, knowing full well how terrifying that human reality can be, a fact which it is the peculiar merit, nay, the peculiar glory of the Jewish mind to have looked in the face. An honest Christian has said that he would rather not read the Old Testament because he was afraid such reading would turn him into an anti-Semite, while to others the miracle of Jewish history seemed according to their own statement, chiefly to reside in the fact that such a history was ever honoured with the title of “Holy Scripture”.

Let us then put this thing in perspective by getting down to fundamentals. There is undoubtedly a sharp distinction to be drawn between the character of the Old Testament and the New. The Old Testament is concerned with natural man, while the New deals with the God-man. But the point of the story of the Redeemer is that it is the answer to that of unredeemed man and his ever-repeated attempts to rescue himself from the power of nature by unconditional obedience to the eternal laws of God. We now can surely see the reason why the Old Testament, which was the testament of God’s covenant with man, should not only have spoken of the reality of God, but was compelled to contrast this divine summons with the actual reality of man in all his enormous sinfulness. “The miracle of Jewish history” therefore consists not only in the spiritual heights attained by the psalms and the prophets, but in the fact that the baseness and falseness of so-called kingly majesty is not, as in the histories of other peoples, disguised and embellished, but described in its true colours without any kind of restraint. We can see this, to quote but one example, in the wonderfully dramatic treatment of the history of Saul, and the same applies to the manner in which the prophet Nathan upbraids King David for his sins, doing so without any respect for the king’s earthly majesty, nay, bringing that majesty into the very substance of his charge. It is

surely significant that such plain speaking was actually honoured and preserved for all generations by being made a part of the Old Testament narrative.

We can see the same thing in the first half of that chapter of Isaiah which contains a portrait of man as he truly is, a portrait painted in the merciless colours of truth. After that it is only logical that the Old Testament should close with a humble confession of human weakness and worthlessness, and that in the face of all such sinful pride a consciousness of human helplessness should find its expression in an ever-new variety of forms.

Without such fearless recognition of the nature of human reality all moral progress becomes impossible—and yet we are always meeting people who simply cannot see that a nation whose history describes with uncompromising honesty the terrible conduct of men forsaken by God, should have been made the chosen vessel of the Incarnation. But is it really so astonishing that the Word should have taken flesh at the very point where human passions raged at their very wildest? Does not the real greatness of the Old Testament consist precisely in this: that no aberration of which our fallen humanity might have made itself guilty could ever drive the mighty theme from the consciousness of the Jewish nation or from the consciousness of that nation's leaders, and that no such aberration could ever silence the unending debate that resulted from the divine summons?

In the case of no other people did history maintain a kind of unceasing argument with God, nor do the works of Herodotus or those of Thucydides or of Livy contain psalms or utterances of prophets. In such writers as these the everlasting drama of the human struggle for power, riches and importance is unrolled before us, but in it there is neither warmth nor light. The Old Testament, on the other hand, shows this very irruption of God into human affairs, and there is no other instance of the chroniclers of such human affairs seeking to come to terms with invisible reality.

All the great peoples of history have their peculiar gifts and

their rôle to play within the framework of human civilization and human culture. The Jewish people, however, seem to have been created in order that they should transcend any mere culture, that they should exalt the reality of God above all other realities, and in order that they should search out God's will and fulfil it. That Jewish people cared nothing for any obedience, save the obedience which was sanctified by this supreme obedience. Men call this theocracy,* but the day will come when they will understand that in the long run democracy and theocracy—I use the term in the sense indicated above—are inseparable one from the other—a fact which incidently is clearly recognized in the constitution of the United States—and that the world as we know it can in the last resort only be governed from the world above.

*The word "theocracy" is here not used in a theological sense but is employed to denote the subjection of all earthly orders to divine truth.

The Great Misunderstanding

WHEN he sent Jesus to his death, the High Priest Caiaphas did not stand alone nor did his action offend the general feeling of the people. That conclusion is surely implicit in what I have already written. Yet the fact is that the proceedings against the Son of God arose out of an infinitely tragic misunderstanding. They were set in motion and sustained by the same tremendous religious fidelity and passion which drove the Jewish people so desperately to resist the according of divine honours to Caesar. "We have a law according to which he must die." This pronouncement by the High Priest found an overwhelming echo in the whole Jewish nation. Had the prosecution of Jesus been cast in the liturgical form, then the people would have responded in unison to Caiaphas's words, "Yes, we have a law for which we are prepared to die." And not only on that occasion, but in all the centuries that were to come, that nation was so prepared. That being so, one can well understand that they approved the death sentence passed on a man who had openly proclaimed himself to be the Son of God.

Now it is precisely here that we can put our finger on the tremendous and tragic misunderstandings which from that day to this have held Judaism and Christianity asunder. The monotheistic Jew was incapable of understanding out of his own circle of ideas the infinite difference between the raising of a mortal man to divine honour and that lofty mystery which Christian belief calls the incarnation of God. This infinite difference can most clearly and most simply be defined as follows: On the one

hand a mortal man is raised to divinity, on the other the Highest and Holiest takes on human form. But the deification of a human being and the incarnation of the Divine Spirit are two entirely separate things which are about as different from one another as two things can be. Yet the whole monotheistic orientation of the Jewish mind served to make the truth more elusive. It is difficult enough for modern man, brought up as he has been in a scientific and technical tradition, to battle his way through to a point where he can receive the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. It was incomparably more difficult, however, for a Jewish rabbi who had personally beheld Jesus in a human form, and who perhaps knew something of his family, to gain even a remote understanding of what Christians meant when they spoke of the Son of God, or to refrain from condemning such a conception as one that was in violent contradiction to the monotheistic spirit that animated Jewish history.

The nature of the immense scandal involved here was grasped in the very depths of his soul by St Augustine, who himself had come from the culture of the Greek polytheism and who for that very reason devoted an entire long chapter of his life's work to the description of the mystery of the Holy Trinity. It is only in this mystery that the truth of Jewish Monotheism is psychologically and theologically reconciled with the truth of the power of the Holy Ghost in the birth and person of Christ. Before that mystery had been expounded and grasped it would have been impossible for any Jew, save as a result of special illumination by God, to understand what manner of being was the divinely sent Redeemer.

When and how will the chasm be bridged which this world-historical misunderstanding between Christian and Jew has opened—this chasm that has separated from one another the two halves of a single great truth, and forced them into an enmity towards each other that has endured for centuries? Is not Christ the final executor of that mighty Jewish resolve to make God the supreme and only Lord of human life? Is not the doctrine of

the Trinity, far from constituting a denial of Monotheism, the ultimate and only possible consummation of its meaning and logic? Is it not, that is to say, an attempt to make real the Divine here upon this earth? Is it not the only possible ordering of matter and spirit at due levels of subordination? Does it not represent the healing of all deadly divisions? Is it not the answer to the ultimate bankruptcy of all abstract philosophy which seeks indeed to make spirit the ruler of human life, but lacks all valid means of doing so and is therefore incapable of thus making men wholly into men?

Now, surely we can see the reason for the impotence of Kant's "Practical Reason" and for the despairing pessimism of Schopenhauer when faced with the dictatorship of instinct. Since the Old Testament happens to close with that pessimistic work, Schopenhauer quotes the book of Koheleth to confirm his own psychological exposition of the spirit's helplessness against the instincts, and this way of looking at things was, as we all know, taken up by the Freudians and experimentally developed. There is food for thought in the fact that a growing movement in the most modern psychoanalysis is increasingly attempting a medico-psycho-therapeutic reconciliation of the Old Testament with the New by means of a synthesis of Jewish ethics and Christian spirituality, and thus working its way towards a new theological harmony.*

Let me approach this whole problem—which is as alive today as it ever was—from yet another angle. A remark was once made to me by a liberal Jewish friend, a person who certainly deserved to be taken seriously, that Christianity with its doctrine of the God-Man was quite indisputably to be classed among the polytheistic religions. Such a judgement completely ignores the fact that nowhere in Christian theology is there any mention

*Viktor E. Frankl, *Die Existenzanalyse und die Probleme der Zeit* (Vienna, 1947). Paul Polak, *Frankls Existenzanalyse in ihrer Bedeutung für Anthropologie und Psychotherapie*. Mention should also be made of the excellent work of the Viennese psychopathologist, Caruso.

of two mutually independent deities. What that theology is concerned with is the incarnation of the second person of the Triune God. To make this mighty mystery more intelligible the author prefers not to speak, as he well might do, of the theology of the Trinity, but rather to listen to a Jewish philosopher of religion from the Spanish period of Jewish history. The reader will thus more clearly understand that when we speak of the Word being made flesh, we are speaking of something of which there are undeniable indications in the Jewish teaching concerning God.

In the springtime of Judaeo-Arabic collaboration in Spain, about the beginning of the eleventh century that is to say, the celebrated philosopher Salomon ben Gabirol wrote a very simple and yet very pertinent sentence. It concerns God and the world, that is, it concerns the mysterious inseparability of the divine and earthly worlds and is conceived wholly in the spirit of the Old Testament. "The power of the divine will is effective down to the uttermost limits of the lowest order of creation," and so, as the Divine without ceasing releases power from out of itself in order to permeate all things from primal matter down to the smallest form of life, it generates—again without ceasing—in the created world an urge towards that highest ordering of all orders—towards the *Fons Vitae*, towards the source of life; and here already we see an indication that the forces behind life are something different from a mere play of instinct, but are mysteriously governed by the Spirit.*

Is it not interesting to observe that a realization of this should not have emanated only from Spanish Jewry—which was particularly stirred by the action of God in history—but that in our own day it should have broken in anew on the spiritual development of one who was himself of Jewish descent, namely Bergson, a man who was both philosopher and biologist. So

*It is generally admitted that the views of Gabirol had great influence on a number of his Christian contemporaries (e.g. Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus and St Thomas Aquinas) though these did not realize that the man who held and uttered them was of Jewish origin.

great was the part played by the reality of spiritual forces in Bergson's conception of the *Elan vital* that he found himself unexpectedly driven by it to the very doors of the Catholic Church.

I mention this here precisely because we are bound continually to encounter the lofty logic of the Jewish conception of God which sees him continually permeating and, as it were, taking possession of all earthly reality. I am deliberately underlining Gabirol's highly condensed philosophy of Jewish history from which I quoted above, because it appears to me to provide the best answer to the wholly unfounded reproach that Christianity presents the world with two divinities, and is thus a form of polytheism. In reality, the Messiah of the New Testament is in no sense a second deity, rather is he the logical expression of that same all-permeating presence of God in his creation; indeed the above-quoted words of the Spanish Jewish philosopher bring home to the believer in the most illuminating way that God does not shrink from taking on "flesh".

The Christian mystery of the Holy Trinity seeks to do justice to God's unity and uniqueness, not by representing the God-Man as a second God—no, the incarnation of God takes place through the mediation of the Holy Ghost and through the birth of the Redeemer in the womb of a sanctified virgin from among a chosen people. God was thus not duplicated but through the Holy Ghost became man—true God and true Man. The interlocking of the two worlds spiritually and physiologically, as it is described in all four Gospels, is a truly supreme example of that co-operation between spirit and nature which permeates both the Old Testament and the New and points to the solution of all solutions.

Tragic indeed is the Jewish misunderstanding of this truth and infinitely tragic the estrangement between Christian and Jew that has resulted from it—an estrangement, in my submission, far far deeper than, even in the given circumstances, it ever need have been, and that is true even if we look at the

matter in what—so far as the Jews are concerned—is the most unfavourable light. Indeed, it is not hard to put this last to the test; for if we examine the charges that have been made against the Jews over the past two thousand years we come across one that is certainly weightier than all the others. It is a charge that was made ever more loudly as Christianity was consolidated into ecclesiastical power. “You have crucified the Saviour of the world; for that you can never be forgiven through all eternity.”

Of course, nobody can deny the substance underlying this accusation. Even so, something definite remains to be said about it. That at a particular point in Jewish history Jewry’s religious leaders were able to impose their will in an issue the real nature of which the generality of the people never grasped at all, cannot possibly wipe out all that was achieved by the Old Testament within the framework of the divine plan in the preparation of men’s minds for Christianity; nor can it wipe the fact out of existence that Providence chose a Jewess to give life to the Saviour of the world. Moreover, it was a Jewish king who was the author of the psalms. These have not only raised the Jewish world to a point where it could express its adoration of all-permeating divine truth in the most sublime manner, but have echoed down the centuries like a heavenly music through the Christian Church, to be repeated by the faithful of all ages, as a majestic confession of their faith.

Since this is so, how was it possible that the very people whom we have to thank for this unparalleled witness to the reality of God, should have been covered by us with contempt and hatred as the enemy of all divine order in our lives? Where is the gratitude of Christians for the foundation on whose mighty plinths rests the whole structure of their faith and from which they have been able to rise to their highest spiritual certitudes? Nay, more, was it merely chance or was it indeed the will of God that the God-Man should have been born of a Jewish mother and should have grown up amid the indestructible certitudes of Jewish

Monotheism, rather than that he should have seen the light of day in the atmosphere of Homer's *Odyssey*?

And yet, as I have said, this estrangement from the chosen people is a fact. How did it arise? And what was it that prevented the Jews from recognizing the character and significance of that divine Christian mystery which was declared to the whole world? To analyse and explain that misunderstanding is a task which we must in no wise refuse.

In part the explanation has already been given. The age in which Jesus appeared was, as I have recently illustrated by my quotation from Josephus, the age in which the Roman Caesars began demanding divine honours from the nations they had contrived to subject, the age in which they actually made the demand that such honours should be paid to them in the Temple of Jerusalem itself. This Roman deification of a mere human being came into violent collision with the whole tradition of a one and only God, in whose name Jewry had for more than two thousand years resisted all invasions by foreign deities. "Thou shalt have no other God but me." That was the wording of the Mosaic command.

Let me now once more underline the causes from which that fatal misapprehension arose. It derived from the fact that, as the comments following my account of the first great religious conflict between Rome and Jerusalem have already made sufficiently plain, there was a confusion between two fundamentally different things, between the deification of a mortal man—and the Roman Caesars were mortal—and the mystery in which God himself appeared in Christ in human form. These two things are fundamentally different; on the one hand a human being puffs himself up into the illusion of divinity; on the other, the Holy Ghost descends and puts on human flesh. To appreciate this difference between the deification of a human being and the incarnation of the Holy Spirit was something that lay wholly beyond the power, not only of the ordinary people, but also of Caiaphas and Pilate. It is not inapposite to observe that a real

grasp of the essential problem has proved beyond the power of many Christians. It has done so because they never took the trouble to ascertain the real nature of the misunderstanding in question and so have been unable to explain Jewry's fault by casting a new light upon its real origin.

Yet the truth should now be plain enough. In the midst of the mysterious interplay of great historical forces there had asserted itself the uncompromising strictness which marked the Jewish conception of the supermundane and superhuman majesty of the unseen God. It was a conception which demanded that such awful majesty must never be tainted through any mingling with the world of creation. In these circumstances there was no possibility of resolving the unhappy confusion, which could not distinguish between deified Caesar and incarnate God, until the mystery of the Trinity had gradually come to be understood, until it had been dogmatically formulated in such a manner that the first person of the Trinity was not overshadowed by the second and thus robbed of its uniqueness.

People are continually speaking—and they are right to do so—of the essential unity of the Old Testament and the New. Yet the underlying ground of that unity is surely none other than the fact that the lofty but strict and unequivocal monotheistic principle of the Old Testament is never for a moment in danger of violation in the New. Indeed that principle was, and is, indispensable if this very mystery of the Trinity is not to degenerate into mere vagueness and imprecision—a danger the extent and reality of which were thoroughly appreciated by St Gregory of Nazianzus, as is shown in the following quotation. “Whoever seeks to grasp and understand the relation of the Three Persons within the single God by conceiving of them in terms of the natural processes by which one generation succeeds another, is like one who seeks to gaze on the sun of divine glory with mortal eyes; such a one will only become blind for the understanding of truth, as was the case with Arius.”

What this amounts to is that Arius denied the reality of the

God-Man because the expression "The Son of God" confused him, and he could only think of Father and Son in terms of an earthly duality, and forgot the third power, namely the Holy Ghost through whom the eternal was carried over into the temporal. The warning uttered by Gregory of Nazianzus is concerned with the deepest mystery of the Christian faith, and thus with the question how the monotheism of the Old Testament can be reconciled with the doctrine of the God-Man.

Of course it was easy for Gregory of Nazianzus to say that people were "over-simplifying things" when they described Christ's divine nature by means of a metaphor from human family life, but is not the same metaphor used continually in the New Testament? Is it not used by Jesus himself and nowhere more explicitly than when he returns a very direct answer to the direct question of Caiaphas? * Yet the Jews in the name of this very monotheism of theirs, refused to recognize a second divine person, nor must we ever forget that from the Jewish point of view the problem here involved was anything but a simple one.

For all that, there is in the Old Testament a mysterious logic which persistently leads on into the New, and we can see it in the Book of Job. Let us remember how Job in replying to his friends describes his earnest endeavours to do more than render external obedience to the commandments of his Lord. He had sought to carry them to their extreme logical conclusion in every detail of his life, indeed, as he himself said, he had commanded his eyes to refrain from all lustful glances so that he might thus reach the point where a man passes from the dominion of his instincts into the dominion of God. How far the sect of the Chasidim had advanced in this direction is well known, and it was little more than an accident of history that they did not yet seek to find man's supreme purpose in the following of the God-Man.

Yet if a man makes a pact with God and binds himself in the most solemn manner to the obedient observance of its conditions

*Luke 22.

the consequences of such action can only be of one kind, for to shake off the dictatorship of natural instinct inevitably causes man to partake of the divine nature. That is why the ever-renewed fidelity to the idea of a coming Messiah involves something more than a mere fantasy. It is something that has grown with an irresistible compulsion out of man's unceasing longing to surrender himself to the law of all laws.

It may help us to understand this compulsive logic if I quote some very remarkable reflections of the Stoic Epictetus; the reader will find that I have quoted them previously in my book *Christus und das Menschliche Leben* (Christ and Human Life). Listen for a moment to these remarkable words in which Epictetus the Stoic expresses his longing for an incarnation of God; we shall then understand how deeply the doctrine of the God-Man was in tune with the spiritual development of the pre-Christian world and brought to that world the redeeming word. Epictetus writes as follows :

Show me a true Stoic; by the Gods, I would once like to see one, but you cannot show me such a man fully formed. Then show me at least one in the process of formation, one who is seriously inclined to this direction; do me this kindness; do not grudge an old man the spectacle which till now he has never witnessed. Show me a human soul which really seeks to be truly penetrated by the divine mind, one that will no longer scold either God or man, one that is deficient in no particular, is guilty of no faults, is never angry, never jealous, never envious; show me one who desires from being a man to become God, and who, even in this dead body, entertains the thought of communion with God. Show me such a man, but you cannot do it.

Do these words betoken anything less than the dawn of Christianity in the pagan soul? The Christian religion answers such pleading and entreaty as that above with the doctrine of the God-Man. In other religions God towers high above life; the Spirit towers above nature, and heaven above the earth, but

Christianity is the doctrine of the power of God entering human flesh. And so, even in Epictetus, we discern the inexorable chain of reasoning; the man possessed of the upward urge towards God, the man filled with God, is ultimately brought to the conception of a man partaking of the divine nature, and so to that of the God himself becoming man, to the belief in the complete realization of the divine within the area of earthly incompleteness. In such a final union between God and man there comes into being the whole reality of the God-Man, and so, inescapably, that moral logic is made plain which unites the Old Testament with the New.

And yet there is apparently a serious contradiction between the two Testaments, a contradiction which had inexorably to lead to the Cross of Christ on the one hand and to the persecution of the Jews on the other. Yet I would not be misunderstood. In the long run we cannot simply accept as part of the order of nature all those things that have led to the unceasing persecution and contempt of the Jews. We really must at long last do some clear thinking about all this and, if that is our intention, there is only one possible approach that is open to us. We must acknowledge our debt. We must concede to the Jews that the almost superhuman force of character displayed by them in defence of the idea of the one and only God was an indispensable historical condition of our escape from the dangers of moral ruin which polytheism involves. As against this, however, we must keep our minds and our consciences open to that mysterious truth that the incarnation of God was the logical culmination of that binding-together of God and man of which the Old Testament is full, and that things could never have taken another course.

At the beginning of this book I said that the non-Jewish peoples concerned themselves with creation, while the Jewish spirit, so long as it was indeed spirit and not mere intellect, was above all things concerned with the Creator, to whom in the midst of unexampled trials it maintained a unique fidelity. Christians have as yet simply not recognized to anything like an

adequate degree how important for the ultimate break-through of Christianity and so for ultimate triumph of the spirit over the material world was this enormous and primitive fidelity, this fidelity which was prepared for every sacrifice. Indeed, it is something of which our contemporary world is hardly aware at all. Yet both the Testaments serve to bring home the truth, though each does so in a different way. The Old Testament shows us the simple and unconditional obedience to the law of God, the New brings us the Gospel of God made flesh—and this is but the necessary and inescapable culmination of all that has gone before, and this is true even though God's incarnation upon earth appeared at first sight to be in violent contradiction with that original faith in a one and only God.

In the final chapter of this book I shall again have something of a fundamental character to say about that contradiction and its resolution. In the meantime let me return to the theme of that heroic fidelity to which we Christians owe so vast a debt.

Jerusalem and the Pagan World

I PICK up the thread of the story some centuries before the coming of the Caesars—and at a very critical point; for, as Kastein points out in his *Geschichte der Juden*, the Greek invasion of the East was for the Jews a wholly unprecedented experience. In the case of all the other peoples with whom they had had encounters there had been some common bond—a common Semitic ancestry, a kinship of speech or, at worst, the familiarity that always tends to subsist between neighbouring nations. When the Greeks came, there was nothing of this, though the Jews at first were not unduly disturbed by the circumstance. All that had happened, so far as they could see, was that they had come under yet another foreign dominion, and this fact they accepted with relative equanimity.

At length the horrible truth began to dawn on them, for Epiphanes now organized a veritable mass murder in Jerusalem, his general Apollonius being charged with the task of directing the action. Hordes of women and children were sent off to the slave markets. The city's walls were torn down, and a fort for the Greek troops was built in the midst of it—the Acra; for Epiphanes had decided to settle accounts once for all with the Jews and with their resistance to Hellenization.

Epiphanes's persecution of the Jews developed into a persecution of Judaism. He prohibited the observance of Jewish religious law, and with particular explicitness forbade the practice of circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath and that of the dietary laws. Needless to say, when he proceeded to organize

sacrifices to the gods of Greece he merely succeeded in intensifying Jewish resistance to its maximum potential. It was through this attack by Greece that Jewry's religious martyrdom received its peculiar form; for that attack was in the very nature of things bound to drive the Jewish people to seek a decision in a last desperate battle. Active and passive resistance now began to spread over the whole country. Bodies of men prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice emerged time and again from their hiding places. They tore down the alien altars, they chased foreign officials away from their posts and fell upon detachments of Greek troops.

The Hasmonean house now becomes the central point of the battle waged for the recovery of religious freedom against Epiphanes and the Greek culture he represents. The call goes out for a holy war and fighting takes place even on the Sabbath. A second and a third army, both charged with the task of utterly annihilating the Jews, are defeated by Judas Maccabeus; the road to Jerusalem is re-opened.

At last in 165 Jerusalem is re-entered. The desecrated Temple is purified and, after solemn reconsecration, is handed back to the Jews. The Acra too, that formidable stronghold, is lost to the oppressor and falls into victorious Jewish hands. Epiphanes dies mad, and so we see the tremendous triumph of a small body of men, who have been faithful unto death to their traditions, over a proud power, greatly superior in numbers, even a power that acted in the name of the successors of Alexander the Great.

Here ends a very great chapter of Jewish history, a chapter that has provided a living proof for all ages of the fact that a truly faithful *élite* can in the end overcome every kind of naked power. It is also a chapter that marks a turning point in the story of the human race. It would be an excellent thing if, in the upper forms of schools designed for the education of an intelligent *élite*, we taught not only the accepted Greek and Roman classics, but also the writings of St Augustine and those of other

authors who came to Christianity from paganism and then explained to their contemporaries why it was that antiquity was incapable, out of its own resources, of solving the problem of man's spiritual and moral liberation. "Plato's ideas uplift the heart," says Justin Martyr, "but they do not cause us to fall upon our knees"; and Augustine, who had passed through the whole course of Greek education, found in the psalms of the Old Testament a clarity and strength, and a sense of spiritual and moral purpose, which he had sought in vain among all the rich wisdom of the ancient world. "Thou didst call me back from the many among whom I did stray, to the One."

As we have just seen, the successors of Alexander the Great endeavoured to Hellenize the Jews. They believed that in doing so they were replacing Jewish poverty with the riches of Hellas. They did not see that out of the depths of the Jewish belief in God there would come forth the world's salvation. St Jerome said, "For as long as a man is still a Greek he cannot become a Christian". Greek antiquity made a cult of creation and brought its whole natural beauty into the light of day, but man must become a new creation; after his fall he must be created anew from above; it is only then that his full divine endowment and loveliness becomes apparent.

Here is the whole difference between the humanism of antiquity and the Judeo-Christian spirituality. "*Alle irdischen Gebrechen sühnet reine Menschlichkeit*," says Goethe. All man's earthly weaknesses are expiated by his humanity. True enough, but as Kirkegaard says, "First he must pass through death". In the nineteenth century there were too many "Greeks" in Germany who thought they could be satisfied with the ancient creation and its beauty, and who left the new creation to the theologians. Yet who could describe the astonishment of all these new Greeks when suddenly they saw grinning forth from the purely human, the face of the all too human—of the de-humanized. Without God and without the God-Man, man ultimately becomes more and more a victim of the demons, and

the richer his intelligence and his imagination, the more abundant have been the activities of his spirit, the more certain it is that this fate will overtake him. It will not be long before even the most blind devotees of a Godless humanity realize this, for it is the ineluctable fate of man when left to his own devices, a fact which no transitory flowering of a rootless culture can ever wholly hide.

The last dreadful chapter in the story of Israel's relations with the Pagan world can be rapidly scanned. I have already described the first collision between Rome and Jerusalem, a collision that resulted from the unalterable resolve of the Caesars to break the Jews' resistance when these refused them the divine honours they demanded, honours that were to be paid in the Temple at Jerusalem itself and in the streets of that city. Since the Caesars were from time to time preoccupied with other tasks within their mighty empire, we can understand that the first great revolt, of which I have given an account, apparently produced no serious consequences. Nevertheless, the Roman counter-attack against the Jewish resistance was ultimately developed all the more vigorously, and with all the greater deliberation. The first step was the capture of strong-points in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. After that Vespasian ordered his son Titus finally to destroy the whole city since it was the only power which still offered resistance to the world-empire of Rome.

The final blow was prepared for by planned starvation. Soon there was nothing in Jerusalem save masses of dying people and the stench of rotting corpses. Nevertheless, such of the population as survived continued their resistance to the last. The Jews, now surrounded by the Romans, led them into a trap in which Roman soldiers fell on to heaps of inflammable material. Heroic women poured hot oil on the Roman victims from the ramparts. All this ultimately produced such fury among the Roman beseigers that Jerusalem was destroyed to the last stone, and such of its population as survived was compelled to flee to the four corners of the earth.

The story of the storming of one particular fortress in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem enables us to gauge the completeness of the destruction even of the last places of refuge in the neighbourhood of that city. The defenders of that fortress had sworn an oath never to surrender, and when it was finally stormed, it was found that the only survivors were two women and five children; the others had all taken their own lives.

An inscription on the triumphal arch, erected by the Roman empire to the victorious Titus, runs as follows: "From the Senate and people of Rome, in gratitude to the Emperor Titus, for having subjected the Jewish people and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, a feat which all previous generals, kings and peoples had attempted in vain." It is a towering monument to the heroism of Israel.

A People without a Home

JEWISH history is marked by the peculiar intensity of its contrasts and nowhere is this more true than in what followed the events just described. Jerusalem had fallen. The Jews were scattered now without a home and this had consequences which were far-reaching indeed. Slowly in the course of centuries the nation, which, before being driven from the Holy Land, had been more distinguished than any other by the greatness of the purely spiritual part it had played, adopted yet a further rôle. It became a most decisive factor in the economic life of Europe and indeed of the world as a whole. Most of us now tend to think of the Jews as a people that had once been consumed by religious passion but had gradually evolved into the supreme exponents of financial expertise, into the master-technicians of the capitalist system with all its world-wide ramifications. The measure of truth—or lack of it—in such a picture may perhaps become apparent in the pages that follow.

This much at least is true. An uprooted people became the natural practitioners of international trade. The mighty horizons opened by religious learning, against which the most immediate and the most remote of the interests of mankind were seen in a kind of celestial perspective, had imparted to the Jewish intelligence a mobility till then without precedent, and had endowed it with a unique power of adaptation to ever changing difficulties and tasks. The economy of Europe would have been as incapable of development without the intermediary agency of the Jew—who knew the whole world and traded in it—as are certain

plants of attaining maturity without fertilization by insects.

Yet despite his high deserts, the Jew was hardly ever to know security. He was to be cursed by unending impermanence, and compelled under duress to make his way from one place to another and from one avocation to another, often being driven to the performance of tasks which none but he would undertake.

As we all know, the Jews were originally a nation of small farmers with all the habits and customs pertaining to such a calling. Ignaz Döllinger writes: "The Jews were always an industrious people. So long as they possessed their own state, work in their fields and gardens together with handicrafts were their principal occupation. Under their hands Palestine became one of the best cultivated and most fruitful lands of the world. Was not the Mosaic law directed entirely towards a people engaged in the cultivation of the soil, the breeding of animals and the care of corn, wine and oil?"

Even at a later date—in the days of the diaspora—besides trade and crafts they continued for centuries to practise agriculture and to cultivate the vine. They were well known as farmers under Justinian and as late as the year 1000 were permitted to acquire land to any extent they pleased.

Cesare Lombrose should surely have called these distant facts to mind when, writing in the year 1893, he asked what kind of farmers these middlemen, jewellers and wine merchants would make and what kind of Jewish farms could come into being on the stony soil of Palestine. Today we know that two generations have sufficed to turn Jews into thoroughly competent farmers. We also know that there were model agricultural estates under Jewish management in Austria, in Bohemia, in Moravia and Hungary. In Russia in the days of Alexander I there were three hundred Jewish settlements distributed over thirteen administrative districts and even as late as 1893 there were eleven thousand families of Jewish farmers comprising some seventy thousand souls.

However, in 1807, when there were thirty-eight Jewish settle-

ments in the districts of Cherson and Jekaterinoslav, occupying in all some thirty-nine thousand hectares the first signs were already to be seen that the Russian government was planning to take all their settlements away from them. An expert on Russian affairs has said that the Jewish question could have been very largely solved in Russia if the three Czars who followed Nicholas I had proceeded along the same road as the aforesaid monarch. Instead Jewish colonization was brought to a standstill in 1865, and eight years later Jews were forbidden the acquisition of any further land.

The circumstance that the Jews were time and again compelled to emigrate and to turn their backs on agriculture brought it about that they were driven to seek a living in various kinds of business and trade. That is why for centuries in the Mediterranean basin we find Jews active as silk producers and silk mercers, while at the time of the Thirty Years' War they seem to have been extensively concerned with textiles—especially in the North. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century the most influential army contractors were Jews and at the beginning of the modern age velvet, silk and wool were considered to be "Jewish goods".

Jews adapted themselves very well to urban life and the service they rendered in advancing civic culture earned them intermittent recognition. How heavily then must they have felt all the set-backs they had to endure, resulting from the ever-recurrent outbreaks of anti-Semitism and from the envy of business competitors! There were, as we all know, periods when no one was allowed to practise a handicraft unless he belonged to a guild, yet these very guilds were determined to close their doors to Jews. Elsewhere, in the world of the Hansa for instance, and in certain cities of western and southern Germany, there were obvious efforts to drive Jews out of all world markets. In the end there was nothing to which they could turn their hand save usury and retail trade.

We all know how the Jews were ultimately shut up in ghettos

and so were cut off from the Christian inhabitants of whatever city happened to be their home. This separation led to a progressive narrowing of the field of their activities and to that peculiar mentality with which they were later to be reproached. Such confinement to the ghetto was of course just one chapter in the story of continually worsening Jewish fortunes, a story which we find instanced on so many other occasions. Under the Romans their position had been a very different one. Let us not forget that under the Roman Empire it was the Jews who acted as the intermediaries of wholesale trade between East and West and between North and South and as far even as the British Isles, and that later they were active in the big harbour towns and in every important trading centre. We find Jewish merchants in a big way of business in Genoa, Marseilles, in Naples, Palermo, Amalfi, Arles, Narbonne, in Venice and Pisa—yes, even on the Caspian Sea and in China. As part of what is really the same picture, we find right into modern times Jewish craftsmen in the most diverse places who are highly valued because of their conscientious work; in Sicily they became the most expert dealers in purple and silks, in Arabia they were long known for their superlative skill as smiths. Yet despite all these qualities which were so highly prized by others, it remained the tragic fate of the Jewish people that, wherever they had taken root, they would suddenly find themselves driven out.

They wandered to many places—amongst others to the United States, to which many of them migrated in the nineteenth century. Here they made a considerable contribution to the development of the rising North American fur industry, as also to the garment industry and the tobacco trade. Here also they were once again permitted to engage in farming and, having once more gained the right to follow this vocation, they even set about the creation of their own farmers' union.

The Jewish skilled workers who had been driven out of eastern Europe and settled in America, came in the course of time to enjoy a very high reputation, and they paid for the improvement

in their conditions of life by the excellence of their work; nor is that true of America alone. Werner Sombart once described the part played by the Jews in modern economic life in the following words:

“On closer examination it grew clear to me—and my conviction in this matter admits of no kind of doubt—that it was indeed the Jews who contributed to economic expansion at decisive points wherever they appeared, while their departure brought decline in its train.”—And that brings me to the vexed subject of Jewish banking and Jewish usury.

In the Middle Ages the Jewish merchant became the first modern man to break into the protected local market with its traditionally fixed price-schedules. As a result, he disturbed and embittered all those who depended on such local security and such an unchanging system of values. When thereafter, with the increase of world trade, people were compelled to resort to the use of money as an international means of exchange, it was naturally enough the Jews who became the first who could make very large sums available. Thanks to this source of power they rose to increasing influence and thus—again naturally enough—aroused feelings of envy and enmity. Moreover, this hostility was increased by the fact that their religious traditions prevented them from having anything spiritually in common with the people who surrounded them.

When after the storms occasioned by the migration of peoples the material life of Europe began to increase in extent and complexity, groups of men who were not Jews began ever more rapidly to concern themselves with world trade and with the business of finance. With increasing determination these last sought to extrude these immigrants from the East right out of commercial life; nor did they do this by successful business competition alone but by every means through which this end could be achieved.

At last only one province remained in which their rivals left the Jews a free hand and even granted them a monopoly; it was the lending of money at interest, a practice which had been

forbidden by the Church. So it was that the Jew, who to such a decisive degree had been responsible for the astonishingly rapid growth of the European economy, was forced down to a level where the only function left him was one that was morally debasing. At that level he was held until the universal development of the banking system enabled him to expand this residual hole and corner mission into a mighty financial institution which could everywhere claim respect. In his book *Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben* (The Jews in Economic Life) Werner Sombart has the following to say (p. 429):

Did the Jews themselves unlock the mystery of money? Did they evolve the techniques of financial lending out of their own inner consciousness? Or did they learn them from the Babylonians? That here in Babylon there was in pre-Jewish times an active traffic in money seems now to have been very nearly proved, though we have no reliable information concerning this traffic's precise nature and form. What we can determine from the source material hitherto translated gives us no sure indication of the extent to which the monetary system and the business of lending money had been developed there. Even so, the germs of the Jewish skill in money matters may possibly be sought among their Babylonian cousins. The question whether this or that branch of a race—all of which derives from a single root, was the first to bring forth the golden fruits, is really very secondary. What is much more important—and fundamentally there can be no doubt about this—is the circumstance that the subsequent fortunes of the Jews positively forced them into money-lending and that this sowed the seeds of the monetary art. The fact that ever since the exodus from Egypt they were compelled to move from one land to another forced them increasingly to keep their property in mobile form, and, apart from jewellery, the most convenient form was money. It was the only thing they could keep with them when they were thrown naked into the street, their only protector when they were ill-treated and persecuted. Should they not have learned to love it when by its aid they could subject the great ones of this world to their will? Money became for them a means of exercising power

despite the fact that they themselves were weak, and through them it acquired this character for all mankind. With the delicate threads of their monetary transactions a nation of little and—in a social sense—quite unimportant people bound the feudal-rustic giant even as the Lilliputians bound Gulliver.

Yet it was only natural that from the moment when the rest of the world forced them to identify themselves in a most intimate fashion with the whole mysterious power of money, the Jews should have been exposed to all the peculiar temptations which are indissolubly bound up with such employment.

*Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri sacra fames!*

Thus Vergil. An eloquent apostrophe! Yet we should not be over-facile in applying the truth it contains—particularly where the Jews are concerned. When we hear, for instance—the point is worthy of parenthetical notice—of Jewish money-changers and of traffickers in various kinds of goods transacting their business in the Temple court at Jerusalem, we must not forget that both in the East and the West the temples of antiquity were something more than mere places where what was thought to be holy could be worshipped. They also served as places where banking and pawnbroking were carried on. This was true of the Greek temples at Delphi, Samos and many other places.

Nevertheless the religious leaders of Jewry had from the very earliest times recognized the dangers men incur through trafficking in money and continued to issue ever more serious warnings to their people on the subject. We find such warnings against the taking of interest—which was regarded as a violation of the biblical law—in various passages of the books of Moses, in the Psalms and in Ezekiel. In Sirach we find the text, “A merchant can only with difficulty guard against wrong and a trafficker against sin”. In Christian Europe we can observe how at a very early stage the Church found it necessary to set her face against the charges of Christian traffickers in money, charges

which often reached levels that were definitely usurious. Even at the Council of Nicaea complaints were already being made against Christians who practised usury, and St Bernard of Clairvaux's pessimism in this matter is such that he is led to say, "If there were no Jews, Christian usurers would be even more extortionate than they are already." Much the same was said by Lambert of Hersfeld who was by no means a friend of the Jews. In his *Inferno* Dante describes places where usurers are made to pay for their misdeeds and where many a highly-placed Christian must undergo the punishment of his greed.

According to the ecclesiastical conception of the Middle Ages, the business of money-lending was charged with the odium of unfruitfulness and was regarded as being contrary to nature. All other occupations were viewed as necessary and therefore lawful; only Jews were permitted to follow the immoral calling of the money-lender. In the case of Christians, however, special "Prohibitions of Interest" were issued to forestall the practice of usury in all its various and often partially concealed forms. Since, however, in those days it was impossible to fix a stable rate of interest, these documents often caused a great deal of confusion.

On the other hand, as a result of these "Interest Prohibitions" the lending of money at interest against security was virtually made obligatory for the Jews, the Church declaring that such sinful practices were the business of Jews who were sinners by birth, whereas Christians, who were the beneficiaries of such interest-bearing loans, were simply obeying the dictates of overwhelming necessity. The victims of this "necessity" included not only the lesser and greater clergy but even the popes, who were compelled to resort to the Jews when they wanted to borrow money. This solid fact forced the Church to engage in a certain amount of casuistry; but the basic position remained. Christians were forbidden to lend at interest and Christian transgressors of this rule were liable to suffer death, but though the Christian might not lend at interest, it was laid down that he was permitted to borrow at interest from the Jews.

Among people who suffered from a continual lack of money this branding by the Church of the taking of interest helped to foster and unleash hatred against the Jews. Yet the Jews were hardly to blame if the transition from the mediaeval economy, fettered as was the latter by guild restrictions, to the new type of economic system brought many hardships and embarrasments in its train. Moreover, despite ecclesiastical prohibitions, Christian usury began more and more to strip itself of its concealing devices. Indeed in northern Italy the hatred hitherto reserved for the Jews began to embrace the Lombards, the Christian bankers, who, as can be learned not only from their popular repute but from actual contemporary documents, treated their debtors most harshly and charged higher rates of interest than the Jews themselves.

This was particularly reprehensible, for the Lombard bankers were secure against the dangers to which the Jews were exposed nor did they suffer from that almost complete lack of rights which was the latter's portion. The fact is that the Jews were frequently the victims of blackmail and robbery and were seeking to indemnify themselves against such losses, for their property was often only nominally their own and could be taken from them at any time. The fact is that the Jews were looked on more or less as creatures of neuter gender by the authorities. They were not regarded as human beings but as *things*, towards which no oath or other obligation was valid and which stood in no need of any human sympathy.

The reason why the word "Jew" was often a synonym for usurer is to be found in the mediaeval structure of society and in the fact, already noted, that people took some time to accustom themselves to the rise of primitive capitalism, so that for a long time the performance of a vital and necessary function went by default among Christians and so was concentrated in Jewish hands. But the Jew paid dearly for the privilege. Desire that was mingled with curses, hatred that yet did not disdain to summon the hated thing to its aid—such were the reactions of Christians

towards the business of finance and towards the Jewish money-lender who was so inextricably bound up with it. Indeed the tragic fate of the Jews in the West was that men had recourse to them when they needed money and then sought to revenge themselves for the very necessity that made them borrow—a circumstance that occasioned bitter complaint among Jewry's spiritual leaders. Even in the twelfth century Rabbi Jacob Tam had deplored the fact that Jews were compelled to lend money at interest to Gentiles. "They have left us," he lamented, "no other means of livelihood whereby we could support ourselves and get together the heavy contributions that kings and dukes exact from us." Three centuries later Rabbi Isserles was to say: "It is true that we live largely by usury, yet it is on the pretext of our usury, which they tacitly condone, that the mighty in the land exact from us the heavy sums they do."

Emperor and subordinate rulers, cities, guilds, noblemen and clerics all at one time or another found themselves compelled to take up secured loans from the Jews, especially during the period from the High Middle Ages to the beginning of the modern era. As a result a few Jewish families had over the course of generations risen to positions of great wealth and had become the creditors of all classes of society. Yet the supposed privileges which had often been extended to the Jews in regard to their financial dealings were really more to the interest of those who granted them, the Emperor, that is to say, the dukes and the various governments; as against this they contributed, as we have seen, in no small measure to the exciting of hatred and envy amongst the Christian population. A situation developed in the Christian West which was not unlike that prevailing in Palestine in the time of Christ when the publicans, whose business it was to gather in the taxes for the Roman authority, became objects of hatred to the Jewish inhabitants.

Nothing that I have said, and none of the examples or historical facts which I cite below—and least of all the fact that Christians themselves engaged in usury—is intended to repudi-

ate or hide the simple truth that merciless creditors were to appear again and again among the Jews engaged in these financial dealings, or that there were Jews who showed real hardness of heart in collecting outstanding loans and seizing pledges, Jews who used all manner of questionable methods and so brought the whole of Jewry into disrepute. For all that, however, I think it important that everyone who seriously concerns himself with the Jewish problem should avoid shallow generalizations and should acquaint himself with the true facts, that he should get to know the real connections between things, though these were all too often kept hidden in the background; he will then begin to understand what it was that led Jews to engage in these oppressively usurious practices to a greater extent than Christians who were free to move about where they pleased. The fact is that the rights of Jews were, so to speak, "built on sand" and, this being so, the risks they ran in lending out money were so great that they had to have their loans protected in a special way and were compelled to insist on pledges, which, in point of fact, were of the most varied kind—land, customs duties, the revenues of courts of justice, Church tithes and even whole cities were taken as security.

Yet the importance of Jewish finance can be exaggerated. We all know, for instance, how great a part in the days of primitive capitalism came ultimately to be played by the Medici in Florence, by the Fuggers in Augsburg, by the Welsers and many other such bankers in Lombardy and Holland. The fortune of the Fuggers, for instance, was estimated in the year 1546 at sixty-three million Gulden. A specialist in this field has said that this represents an accumulation in a single hand which, relatively speaking, cannot be matched by any fortune in present-day Europe. We also know that, by means of the wealth they had won on the world markets with the help of their monopolies and great commercial institutions, the Fuggers and Welsers had considerable influence on contemporary events. The house of Rothschild is often regarded as a symbol of Jewry's immeasurable

wealth. Yet the wealth and influence of the Rothschilds cannot be compared with the high finance of Wall Street where the great majority of the leading personalities are not Jews at all. I do not of course deny that Jews have played a great part since the seventeenth century in the building up of the banking system and in the development of important European banks; most of the founders—to quote one example—of the Deutsche Bank were Jews, while the foundation of the Darmstädter Bank was due to the initiative of Oppenheimer in Cologne, and it was Isaac and Emile Pereire who founded the Credit Mobilier in Paris. It is also true enough, as we have seen, that Jewish bankers and money-changers repeatedly acquired large fortunes as a result of their industry and of the conjunction of a number of favourable circumstances. Yet we must in no wise overlook the fact that, despite the existence of this minority of rich Jews who had been accepted into the service of capitalism, the majority of Jews—particularly in the East—were proletarians of the very poorest kind. For centuries in Russia, in Roumania, in the Bukowina and in the Balkans generally, in Poland and Galicia, such poor Jews waged a tragic battle for existence, nor did the governments concerned trouble to improve their well-nigh unbearable conditions. Tolstoy tells us that in his own day it was “not the wealth but the poverty of the overwhelming majority of Jews” which leapt to the eye.

As against this, though purely material success is really irrelevant to the essential mission and gifts of the Jews—and this applies even more to the mere acquisition of wealth—it is only just to say something of certain positive achievements by Jews in the material sphere. Strongly influenced as they have been by Mediterranean culture, Jews have tended to display great mental mobility, a marked capacity for mental co-ordination and a certain clarity of vision that enables them to take in a given set of circumstances and to grasp their inter-relation at a glance. It is these qualities that have made possible their successes in a world of free competition and economic individualism, their suc-

cesses in the advertising business, for instance, and many other fields. Many of their achievements, particularly in the domain of finance, are worthy of genuine respect.

At one time their ability to undercut their Gentile business competitors on the market was held very much against them. Later the principle of lowering prices by means of a large turnover was to find universal acceptance in the business world. The Jews invented the business of exchanging the money of one country for that of another. Wilhelm Roscher, the economist, has expressed the view that in doing so they brought something into being that was as important as the invention of railways or the electric telegraph. Werner Sombart declares that there is often "more business acumen displayed over the counter of a small Galician shopkeeper than in the building up of a multi-millionaire company in Western Europe".

PART II

THE MARTYROLOGY OF ISRAEL

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The Beginnings

I SPEAK in this section of the martyrology of Israel, and in following that grim and bloody story the reader may be struck by the fact that I have nowhere attempted an actual analysis of the causes of anti-Semitism. The reason is simply that within the brief compass of this book I have had to confine myself to the visible actions of men and could say little of the invisible springs of that action within their minds. Indeed I may here and there have given the impression that there was nothing more at the root of the matter than social and economic group-jealousy. Yet so pedestrian a circumstance could scarcely have caused—in the case of this one unique race and of no other—the repetition, almost agonizing in its regularity, of that sickening cycle in which tolerance gives place to hatred and hatred to bloody horror.

Clearly there is some hidden thing at work here. To say that anti-Semitism is the work of the Devil is rather too facile, though the Devil has most certainly had a hand in it. The question remains why the Devil, who, like anybody else, tends to take the line of least resistance, should tempt men in that particular way.

Part of the explanation—perhaps the greater part—may be that in our unregenerate human nature cruelty often fortifies the ego and adds to our sense of security. Children sometimes bear witness to this repellent fact in the torturing of helpless animals. People with balanced personalities tend completely to outgrow the thing. Others carry the disgusting affection—or some trace of it—into their adult lives. For these the Jew, already marked

by a vague theological odium and already accepted as the traditional whipping boy, provides the obvious target.

This is admittedly a crude analysis, but, as I have already indicated, I am more concerned in this book with certain brute facts of history—facts which even today are still insufficiently familiar—than with scientific psychology. Not that the psychologist has no part to play in this affair. Indeed, by interpreting it in terms of valid psychological concepts, we may better recognize the ugly thing for what it is—and that, under God, may prove to be the first step towards the ending of it. With these thoughts in mind I approach the subject which is the theme of this part of the book.

Under the title “The Romantic aspects of martyrdom among the Jews in the Middle Ages” (*Die Romantik des Martyriums bei den Juden in Mittelalter*) M. J. Schleiden, a Protestant publicist, has produced a pamphlet which I should very much like to quote. I do so because it shows how necessary it is to drive home a point which I myself, as it happens, am only too anxious to make.

As to the romantic aspects of Jewish martyrdom, Christians have a quite remarkably short memory for their own sins, and so by and large hardly any mention is ever made of the terrible history of suffering which was the portion of the Jews in the Middle Ages. It is an immense tragedy—a tragedy compared with which all that we really know of Christian martyrdom under the pagans is mere child’s play.

I could not follow the development of Jewish scholarship in the Middle Ages [the author continues] without becoming acquainted with this, the reverse side of their destiny, and I cannot help thinking that in enlightening people on this subject I shall be doing something that is of interest to those who think and feel, nor can I think of a better introduction to this sketch than the words of Zunz: “If there is such a thing as a ladder of suffering, then Israel has mounted to the highest rung; if the duration of anguish and the patience with which it is borne has ennobled men, then the

Jews can compete with the highest-born in every land. If a literature is accounted rich when it contains a few classical tragedies, then what place can be claimed by a tragedy which has lasted for a millennium and a half and which has been composed and enacted by the hero himself?"

Obviously if I am going to talk about the martyrology of the Jews, I must begin my narrative at some point after their expulsion from Jerusalem. Even then their agony did not begin immediately—not till the seventh or eighth century in fact, though there were, as we have seen, spasmodic outbreaks against them at an earlier date. No doubt the reason why their real troubles began when they did was that representatives of racial elements which had only been converted to Christianity for a matter of a decade began increasingly to attain power and influence in the ecclesiastical world. Actually centuries had yet to pass before these elements could adapt themselves to the great ethical traditions which were represented in what are loosely called the "Mediterranean cultures". Surely it is no mere coincidence that an increasing severity of legal enactment against the Jews first made its appearance, not in Rome, but in Toledo, the territory lying at the extreme western end of the Roman Empire when the empire was converted to Christianity.

Among the reasons for the undoubted deterioration of the position of the Jews in Western society we might point to yet another fact. The closer association of Jews and Christians was gradually producing a number of tragic conflicts which undoubtedly arose from the fundamental differences between the two. Many of these clashes can hardly weigh lightly on the Christian conscience. Surely we should not only speak of a Jewish tragedy and a Jewish martyrology. In the last resort it is to a Christian tragedy that we should refer—the tragedy of a defection on the part of all too many Christians from the profounder implications of Christian truth.

The cruelties visited upon whole masses of Jews in Christian

Europe defy enumeration. Spreading of rumours, superstitions, slanders of all kinds, to say nothing of the greed for Jewish goods—all these had their melancholy but predictable results—persecution, plunder and mass murder. There is hardly a single form of brutality and injustice which the mind can conceive that was not perpetrated to the full.

In the first Christian centuries the Jews who had been expelled from their native land and had fled to the West, maintained good relations with their Christian surroundings. Christians during that period visited synagogues to hear Jewish sermons and in a few cases Christian clergy even went over to Judaism. Nowhere at that time were there discriminatory laws against Jewish freedom of trade and movement. It was only with the Council of Toledo in the year 681 that the Church began to introduce measures against the Jewish population. More and more limitations of every kind began now to be imposed on Jewish freedom, so that at last no means of livelihood was left to them save petty retail trade and usury. Naturally enough this aroused feelings of hatred among the Jews towards their oppressors.

As soon as the various races and peoples that make up the European family had begun to establish themselves in what was to be their homeland, as soon as these races could aspire to a secure livelihood, the Jews were increasingly excluded from all trades and professions, and especially from agriculture and handicrafts. The hopeless economic disorder of the early Middle Ages made things even more difficult; to this was added the effects of superstition and of an utterly unchristian spirit. Ignaz Döllinger is surely right in saying that a more wretched existence than that of the Jews in this part of the world simply cannot be conceived.

I have spoken of a Jewish martyrology, let me show you by a few examples—and they are a fair sample of the kind of thing that happened—the stuff of which that martyrology was made. Let me tell something of these Jewish persecutions and show

you something of the sheer horror of the methods used when such a persecution was afoot. Let me show you how in these, the incipient Middle Ages, the Jews were thrust down ever more deeply into a pit of misery and stripped of the most elementary dignity of men.

Let me begin by telling what happened at the time of the Crusades. In 1096, at Clermont in France, men resolved on war. The Cross was to do battle with the Crescent. Islam had conquered Jerusalem and Christians could no longer visit the grave of Christ. In pious ecstasy thousands vowed to leave house and home with weapons in their hands to wage war against the enemies of the Faith and never to rest until Jerusalem was once more a Christian city. As a sign of this vow they had a red cross stitched upon their shoulder.

The issue seemed simple. It was, unfortunately to be made simpler still. A huge band of crusaders gathered under the Frenchman, William the Carpenter. Disdaining the delay involved in awaiting the main army, they contended that since their mission was to destroy the infidel, they might set their hand to the task without going further afield, by exterminating the offspring of Christ's crucifiers who were living all around them.

The limpid cogency of the argument made instant appeal and the first blow fell on the Jews of France. These, however, contrived to obtain the protection of authority. The Jewish communities in the Rhenish episcopal seats, on the other hand, were less fortunate. Emperor Henry IV, who was a just ruler as far as the Jews were concerned, was at this time out of the country, and there was no secular arm to take Jewry's part. Jews stood helpless before the approaching storm.

The first impact was felt in Trèves. The assault was delivered by overwhelming numbers who knew no mercy or restraint. Many Jews were driven to utter despair—husbands killed their wives and mothers their children to save them from a more agonizing death. Many families were burned to death by flames

kindled by themselves. Those who lacked this desperate courage begged Bishop Egilbert for protection. The man of God, however, was somewhat niggardly of comfort, explaining to the Jews that their sins were now being visited upon them, promising them peace and quiet enjoyment of their goods if they repented, but threatening them with destruction of both body and soul if they remained obdurate.

In sheer terror the Jews accepted baptism, or at least underwent the ceremony. One old man, however, who had thus succumbed to the temptation of saving his life, that same evening underwent a change of heart. Full of remorse he killed both his daughters, set fire to his house and threw himself into the flames.

In Speyer the crowd dragged a number of Jews into the church where they were to be baptized; the brave men resisted and sealed their fidelity to their God with death. The noble bishop Johannsen came to the aid of the rest; he received them into his fortified palace, faced the crowd of attackers and even had some of them executed. Under the bishop's protection the Jews managed to defend themselves, and at length their assailants departed.

Terrible indeed was the fate of the Jews in Worms. The mob launched its full fury against them and many were robbed and throttled to death; the Scrolls of the Torah were desecrated. As in Trèves, mothers laid hands on their own children.

Some of the Jews sought to defend themselves but fell before superior numbers. A great number took refuge in the bishop's palace. After some days, however, the bishop told them that he could no longer give them his protection unless they accepted baptism. The Jews asked for a period of grace so that they might consider the matter; when this was over, the bishop had the doors opened, but nothing but blood and corpses were to be seen. Faced with the choice—baptism or death—the Jews had preferred death, either by a friend's hand or by their own, to any communion of faith with such creatures as these, creatures who, by such bestial lust for blood and gain, dishonoured the image of God, both in themselves and others. Eight hundred

Jews died on that occasion in Worms as martyrs to their faith, and even today, eight hundred pious souls are still remembered there in intercessory prayer.

With their thirst for blood still further whetted, the *Walbrüder* foregathered in the city of Mayence. They were led by Count Emicha von Leiningen, a relative of Mayence's Archbishop Rudhard. The Jewish inhabitants—1,300 of them—had entrusted their goods and treasures to the archbishop, hoping that within his palace he would protect both their property and their lives. But Emicha's men had no difficulty in entering the episcopal residence and there they began their grisly slaughter; 1,300 Jews died by the hands of their enemies, or by their own. But contemporary witnesses relate that before their death they sang a hymn—a hymn of praise to the one and only God.

This bloody chronicle is not wholly devoid of deeds of mercy. Bishop Hermann of Sologne, for instance, seriously tried to put an end to the orgy of murder and suicide. He offered many of his Jewish fellow citizens sanctuary in the neighbouring villages, and even persuaded many burghers of the ancient city of Cologne to allow Jews to find a refuge in their homes. As to the murderers, their crimes did not go unpunished. As they marched eastward they were slaughtered by the Christian peasants in Hungary, down to the last man.

The record of the main army of the Crusaders, led by Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, is, naturally, more favourable and is unstained by this particular kind of outrage. Even so, it is marred by the wholesale slaughter that occurred once Jerusalem was conquered. Mohammedans were the principal victims, but the fate of the Jews was no better. They fled into their synagogue, but the Christians set fire to the building and those who prayed there died in the flames.

In the second and third Crusades all these horrors were repeated, the third Crusade being particularly notable in this respect, in so far as the preparations for it at the time of the crowning of England's Richard I were marked by the first

bloody outbreaks against the Jews on English soil. "England," remarks Kastein, "thus attained the level of other countries."

Yet here and there in this ugly story we encounter, as we have already seen, some personality whose conduct did not make a travesty of the spirit of Christ. Such a one was the Emperor Frederick I, for whom the Crusades had a real religious significance and who did not see in them a pretext for the murder of the innocent.

Frederick did all he could to prevent the persecution of the Jews. He provided for fortified places where they could be safe while the Crusaders passed through the Rhineland, and issued a proclamation which threatened any person injuring a Jew with heavy penalties, the killing of a Jew being punishable by death and the wounding of a Jew by the loss of a hand. Monks meanwhile were enjoined to guard their tongues and to avoid all hostile references to Jews in their sermons.

A further proclamation is worth quoting at some length. It is a heartening document, showing how even in those days, an enlightened ruler could conceive of the right relationship between Christian and Jew—and most especially between Christian Crusader and Jew.

It is the duty of imperial majesty (and this is sanctioned by justice and demanded by reason) that we should render to all our faithful subjects—and by this we mean not only those who are devoted to the Christian religion, but those who, departing from our Faith, follow the customs of their fathers—all that is due to them, and that, according to the dictates of justice, we should ensure the continuance of their customs, tranquillity for their persons and the security of their goods.

The Asiatic plague brought fresh miseries to the Jews. In the dreadful years 1340-1350 the plague known as the Black Death advanced from the Black Sea over southern France into all the countries of Europe, gathering as it went a terrible harvest; men asked whence this disaster came and what could be done against

it. The question had only to be posed for the anti-Jewish complex to be set to work. It provided both an answer which was intellectually satisfying—given the credulity of the time—and a pretext for the hounding of the Jew, perhaps of getting rid of him for good. Clearly the Jew was the culprit, the motive of the Jewish crime was obvious enough and the imagination provided the necessary circumstantial detail of its execution. The Jews had poisoned wells, springs and rivers, their intention being nothing less than the extermination of all Christians.

What then was to be done? All over the land superstition gave the same answer. In order to appease the divine wrath, the Jews must be annihilated. Pope Clement VI personally guaranteed the innocence of the Jews and ordered the faithful to pause. He endeavoured to re-awaken men to ordinary common sense and proclaimed far and wide that Jews were dying of the plague quite as much as Christians, and that, conversely, the plague was raging in places where no Jews were to be found, but superstition was stronger than reason.

And now the evil began to take its course and once again the bloody mechanism was set in motion. In more than three hundred and fifty communities Jews were slaughtered, drowned, burned, hanged, throttled or buried alive because of their alleged guilt. In many places, as before, the victims would not wait for their fate to overtake them but died by their own hands. All their possessions were either plundered or destroyed.

It is typical of the spirit and general moral confusion that prevailed at the time of the plague that Duke Amadeus of Savoy tortured one of the most famous of Jewish physicians until the latter confessed to his imputed poisonings and even revealed his poisons' ingredients. These consisted, according to his own statement, of a mixture of snakes, frogs, scorpions, of consecrated hosts and of Christians' hearts. On the strength of this alleged evidence masses of Jews were burned.

The Swiss were the next to act. In Zurich, Constance, Schaffhausen, Uberlingen and in other places on Lake Constance,

Jews were burned, broken on the wheel and hanged, and from Switzerland the crazy tale passed into Germany. There were but few places where attempts were made to put an end to the slaughter. In 1349 a gathering of magistrates, nobility and clergy outlawed all Jews and determined to expel them from all the cities of Alsace and of the Rhineland. They were as good as their word, but others did even better. In Strasbourg 2,000 Jews were driven into a wooden building and burned. All Jewish property, I might add, was distributed among the Christian citizens.

As this mass delusion died away, people began, naturally enough, to realize that it was themselves whom the murderers had injured. Those who had been killed were seen to be irreplaceable. The clearest evidence of this is a chronicle of the year 1352 which recalls how Ludwig of Brandenburg issued an invitation to the Jews to settle in his domain, all taxes being remitted to them. The reason for this measure was expressly mentioned. It was that after the great massacre of Jews at the time of the plague there was an acute shortage of money all over the country, and indeed everywhere attempts were made to persuade surviving Jews to return, even where it had been resolved never to suffer the presence of Jews again "for all eternity". The surviving Jews, however, were now so hopelessly impoverished that they could do little to resolve this crisis.

All this aroused an almost indescribable feeling of enmity, experienced in due course by both the parties concerned, an enmity which finds expression in such words as those of John of Capistrano when he declared that all Jews were enemies of the Faith, and should be put on ships and drowned. After the persecutions at the time of the Black Death, Christians and Jews ceased to have anything in common, and there was nothing left but bitter mutual hatred. One result of this was that during the course of the fifteenth century Jews were expelled from all the most important mercantile cities of the Empire—from Cologne for instance, in 1426—"in honour of God and the Holy Virgin". The long tale of Jewish suffering confirms the truth

that was uttered by Balzac—great expert of souls that he was—that superstition which derives from a misunderstanding of religion is the worst form of fanaticism, and can take root in men's minds with a quite exceptional tenacity.

The Inquisition

LET me say something about the fate of the Jews in Spain and Portugal. We all know the shameful story of their sufferings in these countries under the Inquisition. What is less widely appreciated—and since it has a certain relevance to my story I should like for a moment to dwell on it—is the quality of the Judeo-Moorish culture, which for a period of some two hundred years preceded the years of martyrdom.

A word about the historical facts. After severe fighting against the Christian Visigoths, the Arabs, with the help of the Berbers and of Jews who had settled in North Africa, succeeded in conquering central and southern Spain. Jews were allowed their full freedom and many of them embraced Islam, as did many of the conquered Christians. This co-operation between Jews and Spain's Arabian conquerors—who from now on were known as Moors—was the beginning of a glorious time of political and spiritual freedom for Jews. Indeed, after centuries of persecution it was for them a veritable period of light.

Let us look more closely at this unique and most fruitful phase of Jewish culture. The political settlement which followed the Moorish conquest not only gave the Jews a very wide measure of freedom but in many instances enabled them to occupy important posts. They used this period of two centuries, with all the possibilities it offered, to develop their cultural gifts and their traditions, and so there arose that springtime of the Jewish spirit in which it could find its full expression, both in art and scholarship.

Among the leading personalities of this period was the poet Yehudi Halevy and the philosopher Maimonides, whose universal philosophy, as we all know, made a profound impression on the civilized world of that day. We might also name that deeply pious philosopher, Salomon ben Gabirol, whose religious metaphysics gave such moving expression in the first half of the eleventh century to the Jewish belief in the all-penetrating power of Divine Truth. Indeed, Salomon ben Gabirol's work had a profound effect on the Christian scholastics who did not realize that the bearer of this Spanish name was a religiously-illuminated Jew. His work entitled "The Source of Life" does more than describe an ordering principle that governs the world but stands high and remote above the fullness of life. Rather does it show how that principle from above works its way step by step through all levels of creation down to the most lowly of creatures, and how the same principle that thus penetrates to the uttermost depths of the created world also irresistibly impels man upward to the world of everlasting value. Rarely indeed has this spiritual greatness of the Old Testament been brought home to men so vividly and in such simple terms as in this description of the world-penetrating power of the Divine Spirit.

As in Babylon after the destruction of Jerusalem, so now in Spain, there came into being for the Jews both a political home and a spiritual centre, and in this external tranquillity and security there came a flowering of the culture of the Hebrew tongue, whose beauty and spirituality still provides nourishment for the Jew in our own day. It was not hard to foresee, however, that as Western Christendom grew stronger, the days of this Judeo-Arabic centre in Spain would be numbered. Slowly but inexorably the counter-attack developed; it came from northern Spain which had remained Christian in defiance of the Judeo-Moorish occupiers of the south.

About the middle of the fourteenth century the Christian elements in Spain began to organize their resistance against the Jews and the Moors. That resistance was planned, calculated

and ruthless, and in the course of time became more and more deliberately aggressive. There were many reasons for sparing the Moors—provisionally at any rate—and so the main attack was concentrated on the Jews.

The springboard of this attack was the Spanish clergy, which, under the watchword "Death or Baptism", now began the battle all along the line. Ferrabd Martínez, Archdeacon of Seville, was the preacher of the terror. Rome forbade this agitation and even as a punishment relieved the agitator of his office; but the Spanish ecclesiastical authorities created him Deputy Archbishop of Seville, and in this capacity he sent a pastoral letter to his diocese, demanding that the synagogues should be destroyed and that the cultic furniture should be brought to him as a sign that this victory had been won. In many places his orders were carried out and in Seville he himself, in 1391, supervised the work.

The effort failed because both the Jews and municipal authorities offered resistance. Three months later, however, it was renewed, and this time it was entirely successful. A community of some 30,000 souls was exterminated. There were 4,000 dead, the rest were made prisoners and sold as slaves; a few were able to save themselves by flight. After this complete "victory" Martínez gave his battle orders, "Jews who will not become Christians will be killed"—and that order was obeyed.

Then the agitation spread to Aragon—to Barcelona, through Valencia and to Mallorca, and there it produced the same results, killings, forced conversions, suicide and plunder. The number of those "converted" to Christianity in this allegedly holy war was some tens of thousands, and still there was no respite. The Dominican Vincent Ferrer passed through Castile and Aragon with his flagellants, preached his "holy hatred of the infidel" and between 1412 and 1413 by the most brutal threats forced terrified Jews in numerous towns to accept Christianity. Some 20,000 Jews were baptized during this period.

Such interference with the lives, livelihoods and professional activities of the Jews in Spain was destined in an unexpected way

to bring its own punishment. The war against the Jewish people led to an ever-increasing exodus of Jews from Spain and this exodus produced economic consequences which were felt by the entire Spanish nation and soon aroused widespread alarm. As one might expect, farsighted and responsible people sought to arrest that exodus—as did Maria, the ruler of Aragon—though with little permanent success.

An interesting consequence of all this was the surprising increase of the so-called *Conversos*, that is to say of Jews who had been converted to Christianity. To encourage further conversions these last were often allowed to enter the highest circles of business and politics. This, however, had unexpected consequences, for the Jews who thus rose into prominence were usually highly gifted and often men of great learning. Until now Jewish competition had worked from without; now it began to operate in Spanish society from within; this aroused much ill-will. Some words of a contemporary Spanish author bear witness to the prevailing mood. "In three instances water is needlessly wasted; water used in the baptism of a Jew, water poured into the sea by a river, and water mixed with wine." The rightless of yesterday were suddenly the influential men of the hour, and all sections of society were secretly disturbed by the fact.

Some remarks in Josef Kastein's book *Eine Geschichte der Juden*, to which I have already referred, are in this case very much to the point; he shows that the tremendous historical and personal consequences that flowed from the denial of his faith were only gradually appreciated by the converted Jew, and they were disturbing indeed when their full import was grasped. The bond of thousands of years of religious development could not be severed nor was there any desire to do so. Jews, despite their formal conversion, continued to carry their Judaism in their hearts and were neither able nor willing wholly to destroy it. Not only that. They practised the rites, observed the laws, festivals and customs of the old religion though they carefully concealed this practice from the eyes of their new co-religionists. Daily

their freedom to do this had to be battled for anew in circumstances of fear and concealment. They lived a double life and each life was a double burden.

The time had inevitably to come when this division between inner and outer life became obvious, not only to the Jew but also to the Christian. Thus there began that epoch so terrible for the Jews, in which the battle against the *Conversos*, who were now called *Marranos*, which means "damned" or "pigs", was openly engaged, and a phrase was coined by the ecclesiastical organizers of anti-Semitism, which inaugurated a wholly new policy against the Jews. "Now," they said, "the Church is in danger." What they referred to was, of course, the invasion of Spanish society by converts who were not genuine converts and who were still secretly Jews at heart.

It was a foregone conclusion—and the whole historical fact of Jewish loyalty to tradition during all their martyrdom was there to prove it—that those who had accepted conversion because they feared the Inquisition would, after that purely formal conversion, do everything in their power to remain faithful to their own religion. It was also a foregone conclusion that this could not indefinitely remain hidden from Christian spies, and that the time was bound to come when the Inquisition would begin to unmask those who were secretly practising the religion of their fathers. The consequences of such discovery followed automatically.

Reports on such secret fidelity to their ancient faith by the Jews spread like a panic among the Christians of Spain, and the persecution which now began outdid even the bloodiest records of the past. In a large public place in Granada, which was specially reserved for the punishment of this kind of offence, statues of the Jewish prophets were set up in mockery of the race. Then the story moved on to its hideous climax. "The Church abhors the shedding of blood"—that was the official line; and so pyres were set up for burning.

In Toledo alone 2,400 human beings were burned in a few

weeks, the burnings taking place on three designated days. Those who openly repented of their false conversions were shown a measure of mercy, the sentence of burning being commuted to one of garrotting. "No period of history," remarks Josef Kastein, "no people, no Church achieved a similar degree of bloody torture save only perhaps for the slaughter of the Incas by the Spanish Conquistadors."

The whole of Europe was startled and horrified by the methods used, and even in Spain leading ecclesiastical circles were disturbed. When a report reached Pope Sixtus III that accused persons were compelled, as a condition of possible mercy, to denounce their relations and friends, he made no secret of his indignation and Rome demanded the right to control the Inquisition.

King Ferdinand the Catholic, however, declared that such control was an invasion of his royal rights and refused to concede it. In the end these attempts at mitigation were answered—by the appointment of Torquemada, who was made organizer of the whole enterprise and granted unlimited powers. Amongst other things achieved by him was that condemned Jews were compelled to hand over all their property.

The battle against the *Marranos* continued to be waged with extreme cruelty and without any semblance of Christian restraint, but it produced no genuine conversions. In the end Torquemada had all Jews expelled—not without vehement protests from many Christians who realized the value of the economic function they had performed, and indeed Torquemada's action not only ruined the middle class, but produced a crisis in the economic life of Spain whose consequences have even today not wholly disappeared.

The fate of the Jews in Portugal was no better. A considerable number of the *Marranos* who fled from Spain requested the Portuguese Government for the right to settle in their country. This right was granted them, at first for a period of eight months,

against a payment that varied between eight and a hundred gold crusados per head.

The simple facts of what followed can be gathered from almost any good text-book, though I particularly recommend Kastein who recounts them as follows :

An epidemic broke out among the Jews that had thus fled to Portugal—there were about 100,000 of them—and King Juan went back on his undertaking and ordered them to leave at short notice. Those who managed to get on board in time were bestially treated by the crews. Many, however, were unable to prepare for the journey in the short space of time allowed. These were declared the king's body slaves and were sold or given away like chattels. Children were sent to the criminal's island of St Thomas where they were to receive a Christian education. Actually most of them perished miserably. Some were spared that fate, for many mothers threw themselves and their children into the sea.

Juan's successor, Manuel, restored their freedom to such enslaved and other Jews as still remained but yielded to pressure from the Spanish king whose daughter he was seeking in marriage. Once more the Jews were expelled. They were ordered to leave within ten months, the object of this comparatively lengthy period of grace being to give them time for reflection; for the edict which was issued in 1496 provided that at the ensuing Easter all children between the ages of fourteen and twenty should be forcibly baptized. It was hoped—a sanguine expectation after more than a century of Jewish resistance—that prudence would meanwhile have led the older Jews to embrace the Christian faith.

Actually the result was merely to speed up the exodus, so much so that the anticipated harvest of souls seemed in danger. The date for compulsory baptism was therefore advanced to March. This baptism was duly carried out to the now customary accompaniment of homicide and suicide, for again numbers of mothers killed themselves and their children.

Meanwhile some 20,000 Jews, anxious to leave the country which had placed them under such terrible duress, had gathered at the port of Lisbon. There were no ships for them. When the time expired they shared the fate of so many of their brethren and were

declared slaves, after which they were held captive and kept without food while missionary preachers vainly sought to exercise their powers of persuasion upon them. Finally, lest even now it should be said that their captors were lacking in zeal for their souls, they were dragged off to baptism—often by the hairs, though again some escaped this fate by taking their own lives.

In due course, thanks largely to the efforts of Ferdinand the Catholic, the Inquisition was permitted to function in Portugal where it displayed the same savagery that had characterized it in Spain. The tribunal, not being a national institution, was forced to work with the local clergy, who showed themselves adepts at the task. Some *Marranos* had been discovered preparing the Passover. The result was the so-called "Lisbon marriage of blood" in which within two days some 2,000 Jews were murdered. Ultimately, it may be added, Portugal obtained an Inquisition of its own whose methods were so horrible that they drew a protest from Pope Paul III and the matter was ultimately brought before the Council of Trent.

So for the Jews more than two centuries of anguish that had marked the end of their sojourn in Spain and their subsequent stay in Portugal were brought to a close. A small part of those expelled went to London and Holland, where they enjoyed toleration and rose to positions of growing economic importance.

The majority, however, decided to return to the East, journeying in some cases to Africa and in others down the valley of the Danube. The greater part of these who thus went eastward eventually reached the new Osmanli Empire, though want and neglect had taken a heavy toll before they reached their destination. The Turks granted them the necessary freedom and, as had happened before in similar crises, they were able once again to gather round their old spiritual centre.

The flight from their homes in Spain where they had once over a period of centuries lived a carefree life and one of rich spiritual content, was a bitter experience for those who underwent it. For they now had to face a new phase of laborious resettlement. During all this time one question weighed heavily

on their minds. Was the heavy blow which they had suffered, namely their expulsion from Europe, God's punishment for their offence in becoming too absorbed in worldly wisdom during their cultural co-operation with the Arabs? Had they thus neglected their religious heritage?

These thoughts caused the Jews of the Near East, who were now once more settled near their ancient home, to become pre-occupied, as of old, with the Torah and they began to regard a strict conformity with the divine law as the only possible foundation for a new life. Actually the heavy fate and the bitter disappointments which the Jews had experienced led them to supplement their ancient study of the Torah with the Cabbala. In this the ancient Jewish conception of the Messiah was further developed and Jews turned to the idea of their redemption with a new and passionate absorption. Redemption, however, was regarded as the outcome of the most strict obedience to the Law. The new trend produced its own literature. The book of a great Jewish scholar, Schulchan Aruch, appeared about this time, and was read and studied all over the Jewish world. What occasioned its enormous popularity was that it contained a wholly new view and a new spiritual interpretation of the Jewish Law.

I shall be returning to the development of Judaism in this new sphere when I come to retell the melancholy story of how Eastern Jewry attained so high a position both in the spiritual and economic fields that it aroused the envy of its new neighbours, neighbours whose character and religious tradition were so different from its own. Envy and hatred were here once again to produce a planned and deliberate persecution.

But first a word concerning a less tragic phase in the story of these exiled Spanish Jews. We saw that in that story we were concerned with more than a purely material exodus. There was, as we noted, a spiritual renunciation of that accommodation which Spanish Jewry had made with non-Jewish philosophy, an accommodation which had reached its culminating point in the work of Maimonides.

There can be no doubt that this accommodation was very largely influenced by the doctrine of the two truths, a doctrine which, even before the Italian Renaissance had gained such a hold over the cultured European mind. Yet, as we have noted, many thoughtful Jews during their flight to the East had begun to have grave misgivings; they began to ask themselves whether the modernist Judaism which had been growing up amongst them with its purely symbolic interpretations of their holy traditions had not caused Providence to set its face against them.

Certainly there had been a considerable growth of this Liberalism, a conception, as Kastein points out, related to that of freedom, "but the most divided of spiritual attitudes, arising from an inability to decide on a simple yea or nay". It had produced the inevitable results, neglect of the ritual laws and a crop of mixed marriages, but it had also produced—and with the same inevitability—an increasing opposition. The challenge, as Kastein again points out, to solve the problem which Maimonides had posed gave all Jewry food for thought "in so far as it had the time to engage in such study and in so far as the nature of its place of settlement permitted any kind of intellectual life. Even the assumption on which Maimonides had proceeded, namely the supposed necessity of reconciling religion and philosophy, was rejected by a great number of Jews. For these faith was sufficient. Nay more, to such men faith was the only thing of any importance whatever. This view was upheld with special vigour by the Jews of Germany and France, two considerations being foremost in their minds: the fate which they themselves had endured and the care for the fate of their whole people."

The idea of a fundamental and inescapable Jewish fate, an inescapable Jewish destiny, was a thing that after two hundred years of peaceful development had nearly disappeared from the mind of the Spanish Jew. The humiliation and persecution which he had endured transformed it into a terrifying reality,

and turned his heart against every form of assimilation and accommodation, which in a more fortunate period of his history he had been ready enough to accept.

The Jew in Europe

LET us now glance at the position of Jewry in Europe as a whole, I have pointed out that the deliberate and planned persecution of Jews in Europe did not commence before the end of the eighth century. I have described in some detail the occasions which in subsequent centuries were the essential mainsprings of anti-Semitism, the nuclei, so to speak, around which it gathered, both spiritually and politically.

The first of these were the Crusades; there followed the outbreak of the Black Death in Europe. At length there was mingled with this whole frightful story of the hounding of Jews that persistent and systematic slander by which Jews were accused of the desecration of Hosts. Though the accusation has been frequently disproved and had been formally repudiated by the Papacy, it was, for all that, repeated again and again by maniacal mobs and made the pretext for the foulest ill-usage. An insane racialism is the last item in the sorry catalogue, a form of lunacy that found terrifying expression in the National Socialist movement. And so—as we all know only too well—the persecution has continued up to this day.

One might have hoped that the great Protestant movement would produce leaders ready to lend renewed force to what the great popes of the Middle Ages had already unequivocally and authoritatively declared. One might have hoped that Protestantism would have forged some of the weapons to combat this persecution, and helped oppose anti-Semitism in all its forms. Yet, sad to relate, the great Protestant movement had in

this respect found itself entangled in formidable contradictions, so much so that any truly inspiring and morally clarifying influence could no longer be looked for from it. Indeed—and we must recognize this unhappy fact—these contradictions had entrapped no less a person than Martin Luther himself.

In 1523 Luther had made much of the fact that Jesus Christ was born a Jew, and deemed it necessary to remind his friends of the circumstance. We have seen how he warned the latter that the Jews were blood relations, cousins and brothers of the Saviour, and that it was to them that God had entrusted Holy Scripture. Unfortunately he also gave other advice and made other utterances of a very different kind. Indeed the great reformer published a number of writings in which these same "cousins and brothers of the Saviour" were made the targets of fierce attack, his letter against the Sabbatarians, for instance, "Concerning the Jews and their Lies," which disdained no form of vituperation in use up to that time. These writings, moreover, were in such an insulting tone that Bullinger, the Swiss reformer, declared them to be the work of a swineherd rather than that of a famous shepherd of souls.

There is an edifying French proverb *Noblesse oblige*; yet when we find that the most infamous ill-usage of helpless Jews was the work of great and famous princes, we must surely conclude that these great men showed no trace in their hearts and minds of being aware of this obligation, for the example set by them of sheer brutality and crude self-seeking shows them to have been men completely devoid of conscience.

The subject is particularly well documented and the facts undeniable. We know, for instance, that in 1306 Philip the Fair, finding his treasury empty, imprisoned all Jews, seized their properties, movable and immovable, including their account books from which their debtors could be identified, and even their synagogues and schools. Then, having thus reduced them to beggary, he ordered them on pain of death to leave the country. The property which the Jews left behind was then sold by

auction, the proceeds, of course, finding their way into the royal pocket.

In such moves as these a reigning prince could always rely on popular support. He had only to attribute his embarrassment to Jewish usury, as in point of fact was done by Philip in the present instance, to have the enthusiastic approval of his subjects.

Once again, however, a regular feature of the story repeated itself. Once again it became clear—and, as always, people were oddly surprised by the discovery—that the expulsion of the Jews, which involved the destruction of a great and indispensable centre of credit, was having disastrous effects on the economy, so much so that nine years after that expulsion, nobility, clergy and people united to petition Philip's successor Louis X to recall the exiles. Louis complied; "I have recalled the Jews," he declared in his edict of 1315—a document not without its humorous side—"with the full consent of the people and barons of this land, because that was in accordance with the people's will."

Such expulsions and recalls were frequently repeated in those days, and they show how closely integrated was European Jewry with the European economy as a whole. It is interesting to note that time and again after these expulsions of Jewish money-lenders, influential Christians who were obviously conversant with the subject declared that Christian money-lenders, who had been tempted to fill the gap, were far more merciless than the Jews themselves. Indeed in 1409 the people of Brindisi earnestly petitioned for the lending of money to be once more entrusted to the Jews, so that "the greed of Christian money-lenders may be diminished".

All this makes us think of the words put by Goethe into the mouth of Hamann in his *Jahrmarktsfest zu Plundersweilen* (The Fair at Plunderweilen):

*Der Jude liebt das Geld und fürchtet die Gefahr,
Er weiss mit leichter Müh' und ohne viel zu wagen
Durch Handel und durch Zinz Geld aus dem Land zu tragen.*

To which Goethe lets the king reply :

*Ich weiss das nur zu gut, mein Freund, ich bin nicht blind,
Doch das tun andere noch weit mehr, die unbeschnitten sind!*

This dialogue may be roughly translated as follows :

"The Jew loves money but fears risk. With little labour and without venturing much, he succeeds in getting money out of the land by usury and trade." To which the King replies: "I know this well, my friend, I am not blind, but this is done in even greater measure by the uncircumcised!"

As to other reigning princes, history is made positively wearisome by the catalogue of their repetitive extortions. Rupert of Bavaria imprisoned the richest Jews in Magdala at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles and forced them to purchase their freedom by an immense ransom. Not satisfied with this, he appropriated all the gold and silver in their houses. In this particular matter, however, a sort of summit of infamy was attained by Charles IV, for he struck at the Jews at the time of the Black Death which was already dire and bloody for them. In 1349 he authorized the city of Frankfurt, against payment of a large sum of money, to exploit the Jews in any way it pleased, giving its citizens full freedom over Jewish lives, homes and properties. Men were explicitly allowed to throw away all restraint, as far as the Jews were concerned, and were assured of complete immunity if they did so.

Nor was princely ingenuity behindhand in rationalizing the princely appetites. An engaging theory was formulated by Ludwig of Bavaria. "All Jews," he declared, "together with their lives and possessions, are our personal property, and we can do with them whatsoever pleases us and whatsoever we desire." This, incidentally, was also the doctrine of Charles IV who in

1347 laid it down that Jews and their lives and properties were wholly in his power and that by reason of that power he could do or leave undone in regard to them whatsoever he pleased. Feelings had indeed changed since the days of Frederick I who had seen it as his duty to guarantee the security of their persons and their property, even of those who were of a different faith from his own.

Now it was different. To humiliate and crush the "enemies of Christ" had now almost become a public duty and certainly that duty had been carried out. Jews had by now really sunk to the condition of slaves who could be bought and sold like any other merchandise. At best the Jew could only leave the ghetto street where he lived at risk of his life, for the power of the princes was absolute.

I venture to quote one more document in illustration. It relates to Albrecht of Brandenburg. "Whoever is crowned King or Emperor of the Romans," it reads, "may seize all the property of Jews all over the Empire and may kill them save for a small number which must be preserved so that the memory of them shall not perish."

What was law for the prince soon became law for the people. Intolerance by now had come to be regarded as a public duty and this idea was deliberately burned into the public mind. Any crime could now be imputed to a Jew without any kind of proof. No sooner was the accusation made than the people were ready without any examination of the facts to burn one innocent man alive after another. On occasion whole communities were condemned to this kind of death.

By way of contrast to the most unkingly words and deeds that I have chosen from the history of European princes, it is only right that I should make mention of a number of enlightened rulers who, to their eternal credit, set their faces against the practices of the day. There was, for instance, Henry IV, who from Italy sent a forcefully worded directive, addressed to all bishops, counts and dukes, enjoining them to protect Jews

whenever the occasion arose and to afford them all necessary assistance. The firm policy of Frederick I has already been described. His successor Frederick II held very strong views about the economic integration of the Jews into the Empire and succeeded in turning his ideas into a reality. Pope Innocent III insisted that the Jews had prepared the way for the Christian faith and gave any such policy that made for their more humane and rational treatment, his moral support. Unfortunately the Papacy had now come more and more under pressure from revolting groups in the Church and ceased to be in a position where it could assert its authority in maintaining the just and legal treatment of Jews.

Let us go backward in time a little and take a somewhat wider view of the fate of European Jewry. Outside of Spain Jews had little ground for the illusions which their brethren within the Peninsula had for a time entertained. A wave of persecution had broken out against them in the thirteenth century, the pretext being the charge, made in the most various places, that they were desecrating Hosts and that the practice was growing. This fantastic accusation alternated with that of ritual murder.

Here is an incident which seems to have opened the flood gates. It is typical of the kind of thing that occurred and throws a ghastly light on the spirit that animated the whole affair. The thing happened in Fulda on Christmas Eve of 1235. The house of a miller was burnt down. The parents were away at the time and the children had been left behind alone. All perished in the fire. No attempt was made to find out the cause of the disaster. Instead, the Jews were immediately charged with having drawn off the blood of the children and then set fire to the house. Thirty-two Jews were imprisoned and tortured till at length they made the confession which their accusers were determined to hear. They were then slaughtered, some Crusaders, who happened to be in the place at the time, acting as their executioners.

From that day forth the wildest charges began to multiply, of sacrilege and the rest. The persecution was intensified till things reached such a pitch that thoughtful people began to be worried. At last in 1247 Pope Innocent III issued a Bull on the subject to the bishops of Germany and France.

We have heard complaints from the Jews [says the Bull], made to us in the most passionate terms, that many holders of ecclesiastical and temporal office, together with others of the nobility, and also the holders of subordinate offices, have invented godless accusations against the Jews in your cities and dioceses so as to provide an excuse for plundering them and for the seizing of their goods. Such men appear to have forgotten that it is the ancient writings of the Jews which bear testimony to the Christian religion. Whereas Holy Scripture lays down the law "Thou shalt not kill" the false charge is made against the Jews that upon their principal feast, the Passover, they eat the heart of a murdered child. If it so happens that the body of a person is found who has been killed by an unknown hand, the guilt of this deed is imputed with evil purpose to the Jews. All this merely serves as a pretext for persecuting them in the most cruel manner. Without judicial enquiry, without giving the accused a hearing and obtaining his admission, and in contempt of the privileges graciously accorded the Jews from the Apostolic Chair, they are robbed in most godless and unjust fashion of their belongings, are delivered over to the pangs of hunger, to imprisonment and other tortures and condemned to a shameful death. Because of such persecutions these unhappy men have felt constrained to leave the places where their forefathers had settled in ancient times. Being in fear of ruthless extermination, they have sent forth their petition to the Apostolic Chair.

Yet even this Bull, which ends by enjoining Christians to meet the Jews in a spirit of friendship and goodwill, failed to have any effect. The conditions of moral decay that marked the interregnum were already too intractable.

I spoke earlier of the emigration of the Jews from Spain down the Danube valley, and so into the territories of the Slavonic

East. I described, amongst other things, how these men, who had behind them one of the happiest periods of Jewish history, experienced in their changed circumstances a deep need for spiritual re-orientation. Let me here briefly continue their story.

For a time they enjoyed toleration and were left in peace. They were even allowed a wide measure of self-government. Then the old hostility set in. It was a hatred in which a variety of elements were mingled, though its essential character is again admirably described by Kastein.

"The old relationships keep repeating themselves," he writes. "The nobility despises the commoner and the commoner hates the nobility. Both despise the peasant and the Russian Orthodox Christian, while both peasant and Russian Orthodox hate and despise the '*Pani*'. All these, however, achieve a brutal unanimity of hatred and contempt for the Jew—save where they can get money out of him, or where a Jew is converted to the one true faith."

Such were the feelings which in the course of time men came to entertain towards the Jew, and the feelings duly found their expression in deeds. Jews were foully murdered, hacked to pieces, burnt alive, disfigured and in thousands of cases subjected to other hideous ill-usage—and all in the name of the Christian faith. As though it were some magic formula the mobs could only voice a single cry—"Baptism or death". If a Jew obeyed them and declared that from that hour he had become a Christian, they actually forgot to plunder him. If, however, he refused to submit to these apostles of the Christian faith, he was subjected to tortures compared with which even the Spanish Inquisition would have had to confess themselves bungling amateurs.

There are contemporary accounts which have come down to us—in particular those dealing with a quite brief period between April and November 1648—which require strong nerves to read. Needless to say, with very few exceptions the Jews rejected the demand for their baptism. They refused, as one of

their historians has put it, to regard the destruction of hundreds of Jewish communities, the killing of their children and the raping and murder of their wives as a valid ground for embracing Christianity. They preferred to remain faithful to their God and their great heritage. By the thousand they accepted a martyr's death. All this happened in the brief period mentioned above. The number of murdered Jews on this occasion may well have exceeded 200,000.

Modern Times

AND that brings me to the pogroms which were yet another expression of the centuries-old persecuting spirit, the same spirit that had spread those slanders about the Jews which had taken such deep root in the minds of Christian peoples. These pogroms, which from the start assumed a very violent form, began in southern Russia in the spring of 1881. Long before they actually took place, the murderous intentions which inspired them had been openly declared, but neither military nor police took any action to forestall the outbreak. To justify the horrors that were to be enacted the word was spread that the Jews had murdered Alexander II and that the Czar had given orders that accounts were to be settled with them. This was done by the devastation and plundering of Jewish homes, by the murder and ill-treatment of Jews and by the violation of their women.

The pogroms were continued in fifty villages of the Kiev district. The punishment meted out as a matter of form to the heroes of these affairs by the Russian courts were so mild and showed such indecision that a new wave of pogroms began soon afterwards. This time they were rather more speedily suppressed, because it was felt they might be part of a general revolutionary movement. The pogromists, however, continued their work underground, using arson as a weapon—and on a very widespread scale. In the very same year there were pogroms in the Ukraine and in Warsaw which resulted in many deaths and in damage to the value of many millions of roubles. In Balta a

pogrom was announced in advance which was to take place at Easter and which was actually encouraged by the authorities. Fifteen thousand livelihoods were destroyed on that occasion and thousands were killed, wounded or driven insane.

Since pogroms were attracting too much attention outside Russia, they were forbidden and replaced by actual legislative measures. In February and April 1897, however, under the bigoted and reactionary Nicholas II, pogroms broke out afresh. Indeed in the strange atmosphere for which he was largely responsible and in which revolutionary tension mingled with an unrestrained cult of "Little Father Czar", it was possible to organize things on an even larger scale. In Kischinew preparations both spiritual and material were particularly thorough. Leaflets, distributed just before Easter 1903, declared that the Czar had issued a Ukase permitting a pogrom and that this was to take place during the first three days of the Greek Orthodox Easter. The signal to start was given on 6th April by the ringing of church bells; there was plundering and, as night began to fall, murder. Jews who attempted resistance were disarmed by the police. On the following day the pogrom was continued and, even by accepted standards, attained a quite unusual degree of bestiality. Yet when the Jews set about creating their own defence organization, they were again stopped by the police.

In Poland the hideous cycle repeated itself. From the middle of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century Jews were continually charged with the desecration of Hosts and with ritual murder. The only evidence adduced was that of corrupt witnesses and confessions obtained by torture. It has been proven beyond any doubt that to provide proof of ritual murder wounds were on several occasions inflicted on the bodies of those who had died from exposure to cold or by drowning. Such charges were substantiated by a method well suited to people's mentality at the time. It was believed that the wounds of people so murdered—or supposedly murdered—would begin to bleed whenever they were brought near the house of the mur-

derer. And they often bled according to plan, the technique of using pigeons' blood for this purpose having been brought to a high degree of perfection. As a result, hundreds of Jews were burned, broken on the wheel and quartered.

The Polish clergy were well aware of Rome's disapproval of these things, but this they seem to have disregarded. In 1756 Pope Benedict XIV was moved by the earnest petitions of the Jews to have a report prepared by Cardinal Ganganelli, so that the whole situation could be clarified. It was not the first time in the history of the Jews that there had been such clarification, the results of which were binding on the whole of Christendom. The Cardinal's long and carefully prepared report said, among other things, that "ritual murder belongs to the same kind of deliberate invention as was used against Christians by pagans in the ancient world". Unfortunately the report was never published, and the Pope must be held to share the guilt of the persecutions which were unscrupulously continued.

Around the turn of the century much interest was aroused in America by a little book entitled *From the Ghetto to the Land of Promise*. This book was the work of a young girl who had escaped the pogroms by timely flight abroad, and it told of all the horrors she had experienced. Amongst other things the young writer said that nothing had moved her so deeply as the fact that a priest had marched at the head of the murdering hordes, carrying a flag in his hands on which was the Cross of Christ. What comment is there to make on such a thing? What can we say of it save that it is a symbol of an utterly bestial aberration into which Russian Christians had been hounded by the agitation to which they had been exposed. Surely this thing is—and will ever remain—an infamous blot on the name of the Russian Church!

The expression "ghetto" marks a phase with which we are all familiar, of the exclusion of Jewry from the society of Western men. Nevertheless only a few people have a clear conception of

the real nature of such a ghetto and of the want, both spiritual and material, in which those who were compelled to live there had to pass their lives. Here is a description of the thing by one who speaks from personal experience. It is taken from Sigmund Mayer's book (Leipzig, 1911) *Ein jüdischer Kaufmann* ("A Jewish Merchant"), and I cannot forbear to quote it at length.

The ghetto in Pressburg (around the year 1840) provides us with an excellent pattern of all other ghettos. It consisted of a single, long but very narrow street. This street was closed every evening by the police, heavy iron railings being used. At night no one could leave it, unless the watchman opened these railings for him. In this narrow street, of which the law forbade all widening, about 5,000 people were at this time crowded together. In this narrow space they were compelled to live and to die. Nothing was to be found in the street except worry and work; those who lived there had no experience of that by which alone such a life of worry and work can be made bearable, namely the occasional interruption of such a grey existence by merriment and relaxation. There was no laughter in the space between the ghetto's railings; even the children never laughed. Despite the quick movements of their features and the volubility of their speech, there was a certain apprehension to be seen on all faces, like the expression seen on the faces of those who fear some great danger, or who have just escaped from it. The fundamental mood of the entire ghetto was one of resignation. It was in the ghetto that the phrase "We are in exile", which somehow sustained the Jew through all his humiliations and all the cares that weighed upon him, was coined. The pressure, however, which that very resignation imposes has in the ghetto produced a peculiar result. There is complete absence of those essentially simple-minded people which every population can normally show. Only he who has lived and suffered along with these prisoners of the "Jews' street" can understand the grim contempt of a Ludwig Börnes or the cynicism of a Heine. Only such a man can understand why a Ferdinand Lassalle and a Karl Marx had of necessity to be Jews. This atmosphere was created by the circumstances in which these 5,000 souls had to live, and here I am not merely referring to material and economic conditions, but rather to those imponderable

elements that are to be found in the political and cultural character of this situation.

The elementary need for a place to live, that most important of human necessities, could in this ghetto hardly be satisfied at all. On one side of the street, the older side, the houses were built against a hill. There was scarcely anything worthy of the name of a backyard; there were merely wretched traps; wooden dark and rickety stairs led to the dwelling-places whose back-rooms, those namely that gave on the hill, could not be other than perpetually damp and dark. The drainage was appalling. Through the absence of a proper backyard there was insufficient air and the whole atmosphere was heavy and stuffy. Not a single house possessed any water supply. The whole population was compelled to get their water from two communal wells, and the water itself was hardly drinkable. The more the Jewish population increased, the more the rents went up and the more human beings became crowded together. The inhabitants were completely subject to the caprices of their landlords—who were, for the most part, Christians—and that dependence was evident in a most disastrous form in the rents charged for shops—and almost all the ground floors consisted of such shops.

The more well-to-do were quite as badly off under the prevailing circumstances as the poor, for the purchase of a house was very difficult for a Jew living in the ghetto. . . . Legally a Jew was forbidden to own any real property; if he bought a house, then a Christian had nominally to be the owner. All these fictitious agreements, however, lost their validity if the house happened to belong to a Christian member of the nobility; for after a period of fifty years such a person had the curious right to seize the house by force if the owner refused to re-sell it at the price originally paid. The authorities did not concern themselves with such matters and in the "Jews' street" there were a number of such "noble" properties.

It is not difficult to imagine the results of such overcrowding of human beings in these unhygienic dwellings. It is not difficult to imagine what effects these restricted conditions, of which they were bound to be conscious at every moment of the day, had on the minds and spirits of the ghetto-dwellers. How they suffered continually because of their anxiety not to lose a place where they could

lay their head and earn their livelihood. All this constituted a burden which alone made impossible all lightness of heart and all quiet comfort of the mind.

As to the living which the Jews in the ghetto were able to make, we must not forget that the craftsmen living in the street, economically speaking, could never be of much importance in any occupation. For historical reasons handicrafts were hardly practised among Jews at all; these were and remained a Christian occupation and Pressburg was naturally no exception to that rule. No Jewish lad was permitted to be apprenticed to a Christian master and no Jew, even if he had attained to the status of a master through some quite exceptional circumstances, could be admitted to a guild. Despite this, there were a few people in the ghetto who carried on as tailors and decorators. They made a meagre living, though of course they could only find their customers in the ghetto itself. Jews in the ghetto lived almost exclusively by trade. On both sides of the street there were long rows of shops; the shopkeepers were largely drapers. That these little shops could carry on at all was due to the fact that the inhabitants of Pressburg used to visit these ghetto shops because they had a better selection and a more extensive stock than was to be found elsewhere in the town.

The education of their children presented great difficulties for the ghetto Jews. There was an elementary school for boys to which children were sent as soon as they could speak; for girls there was no school at all and parents had to rely on private tuition. If, after a boy had passed through the elementary school, his parents wanted to send him to the gymnasium [grammar school], which generally meant sending him to Vienna, special permission had to be sought, as actually happened in my own case, and this permission was only granted in the rarest instances, for no Jew living in the ghetto was permitted to undertake any journey, or to remain for long outside the ghetto's walls.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the nationalism which spread throughout Europe as a result of the French Revolution developed in Germany into racial mania and so produced a new kind of anti-Semitism, an anti-Semitism for the theories of which Houston Stuart Chamberlain's *Foundation of the Nine-*

teenth Century became in due course an authoritative text-book. This is not the place to enter into all the racial theories which that book contains; suffice it to say that all the values and all the destructions of values which pertained to the anti-Semitic philosophies of National Socialism were founded on them.

I must, however, at this point, call attention to the fact that the application of National Socialist theories to the Jewish question was made easier through the existence of modern Austrian anti-Semitism, which continually gained ground as Jewish refugees from the Slavonic East made their way into the territory of the Austrian monarchy. This anti-Semitism found ever more explicit expression when Jewish intellectuals began to capture the leading organs of the press, and it was almost inevitable that this development should have led to a conflict between Christians and Jews. It was, however, the Christian Socialists who more than anybody else let themselves be driven into a vicious anti-Semitic campaign. (Hitler was a direct product of this "Christian" anti-Semitism.)

In Vienna the essentially Austrian anti-Semitism which I have just described joined up with the corresponding German product which the neo-German racial propaganda had called into being, and which was gaining ever wider influence in Germany. The extent to which the campaign of hatred against the Jews spread into Protestant circles—one need only recall the name of the Court preacher, Stöcker—is a matter which lies outside the scope of this book.

Unfortunately Chamberlain's book was not without influence among intellectuals and caused large numbers of German intellectuals to develop a fundamental hostility towards the Jews, so that National Socialist agitation found all doors open to it. It should nevertheless be placed on record that there was in Germany a not inconsiderable minority which refused to succumb to this agitation and which did not hesitate to express its feelings when the National Socialist campaign of violence against the Jews began to gain momentum. Indeed, the resistance offered by

this minority succeeded for a time in preventing an open war being waged against the Jews, though in the end, when the time was considered ripe, the National Socialist plan for the root and branch extermination of Jewry was, as we all know, put into effect.

The circumstances of the mass extermination of the Jews in Auschwitz* have in recent years become so widely known that it does not seem necessary for me to go here into great detail about it. I will confine myself to one short quotation from Lord Russell of Liverpool's *The Scourge of the Swastika*, to certain words which are a sort of distillation of all the horror that this story contains. "The murder by the Germans of over five million European Jews," he writes, "constitutes the greatest crime in world history. Why the total Jewish population of Europe was not exterminated is due solely to the fact that the Nazis lost the war before they could bring their 'final solution of the Jewish question' to its conclusion." I cannot resist quoting a further passage from this book which gives an excellent account of the manner in which Jews were transported from all the countries of Europe to Auschwitz, there to meet their ghastly end.

After unloading at the siding, all the victims were assembled in one place . . . where they had to take off their clothes and shoes. The men did this in the courtyard, the women and children in a hut nearby. The women then had all their hair cut off and the whole convoy, men, women and children, now naked and shorn, were driven along the road to the gas chambers, having been told they were going to the bathhouse. When they reached the lethal chambers they were driven in with their hands above their heads so that as many might be squeezed in as possible. The children were piled on top. Sometimes the infants were first killed. . . . One SS specialized in this, seizing them by their legs and killing them

*Cf. the chapter entitled "*Das Verbrechen am jüdischen Volke*" (The Crime against the Jewish People) in the present author's book *Deutsche Geschichte und Politische Ethik* (German History and Political Ethics).

with one blow on the head against a wall. . . . The actual gassing in the chamber lasted about fifteen minutes and when it was thought that they were all dead the doors were opened and the Jewish working party removed them and prepared the chamber for the next batch.

When we read of these horrors our first thought is, naturally enough, for the victims; yet there is one aspect of it that we should not overlook. It is a kind of moral suicide on the part of the Nazis themselves. How excellently Müller-Claudius in his *Deutsche und jüdische Tragik* describes the peace of soul, hideous in its very serenity, with which the Nazi executioners went about their tasks, "their faces motionless like death's-head masks behind which lay the inert asphyxiating atmosphere of a decomposing conscience" (*hinter der die Stickluft eines abgestorbenen Gewissens reglos lag*). It is not the least of all the terrifying elements in this nightmare.

In the Russian town of Rowno over 100,000 Jews were slaughtered; an account of this massacre was sent to me by a certain Hans H. Pilz, an Austrian officer who served in both world wars, and a staunch upholder of my ethical and political principles. For seventeen years the memory of these events created a turmoil in this man's conscience. At length he resolved to free himself from this moral nightmare by sending me a full report on the whole business. Here is a part of it.

Together with the reports on the situation in Kiev we also received a private letter, in which a quartermaster of our regiment informed us confidentially that 96,000 Jews of this starving and dilapidated town had been shot by the SD and the *Sonderpolizei*, the corpses being covered over by means of explosives let off in the ground.

Yet what disturbed my informant in a quite special manner was something that happened in this small Russian town of

Rowno, where—it was November 1941—a visit was expected from Erich Koch, Gauleiter of East Prussia. It was hinted, however, that the dignitary in question would not put in an appearance until the Jews who inhabited the place, of whom there were more than 15,000, had all been destroyed.

So measures against the Jews began to be taken immediately. On 3rd November an announcement was made that all Jews of the town were to assemble at a specified place outside it in the early morning of the following day. In the dim light of the dawn men, women, children and old people moved towards the place in question, escorted by *Sonderpolizei* and by members of the Ukrainian volunteer militia. More than 15,000 people marched to a place where there was a depression in the ground; an ammunition lorry that accompanied them made the nature of their fate all too clear. Arrived at their destination they were told to wait for further orders. Meanwhile armed troops formed a ring around them from which it was impossible to escape. When the firing of automatic pistols began near the mass graves, all knew that the deadly trap had closed.

To the accompaniment of indescribable lamentations by the victims, the shooting continued throughout the day. As that day wore on, stragglers, together with such Jews as had been unearthed from hiding places, were brought to this scene of horror and then despatched singly by a shot in the back of the neck. It is only right to mention that there were isolated cases where men of the Wehrmacht, moved by compassion and by the terrible nature of the scene they had witnessed, attempted to save individual Jews and get them away from the town. It was the *Sonderpolizei* however—consisting almost entirely of quite young men—who had been entrusted with the bloody work of slaughtering Jews; they had been specially schooled and prepared for this inhuman duty when they passed through the hands of the *S.S.-Standarte Ostland*.

Conscious of the fact that we had seen the most hideous thing that we had ever beheld in the whole of our lives, we burnt that very evening all the books we had taken along with us—including even the works of Goethe. All the usual talk of culture and civilization seemed in that moment to be a lie, and we resolved that when

the war was over we would live like Franciscans and become apostles of humanity—nothing less would serve.

One of the things that decided me to make the above confession was the fact that I remembered some words in a book of yours, *Sehr geehrter Herr Professor Foerster*, which appeared at the end of the First World War, words addressed by you not only to your own countrymen but to all belligerents:

“A lasting peace between nations presupposes that the business of taming the forces of nature within the human heart should be undertaken with a much greater seriousness of purpose than has hitherto been the case, it presupposes that men should at last have grasped the fact that a true human culture cannot be built up on technical achievement and the egotistical conflict of interest. Indeed unless the spirit of raging destruction is to level all things to the ground, higher powers of the soul must be called into play.”

These words died away like the words of so many men who called into the wilderness and into the void. Both victors and vanquished of 1918 chose other roads. What followed we have ourselves experienced—a world torn asunder by hatred and violence in which sheer horror has begun to triumph.

Surely no better ending could be found to this chapter than the shattering narrative which I have just reproduced. It is a narrative which shows beyond any possibility of misconception how the cold mechanical cruelty behind the mass destruction of Jewish life grew steadily greater during the whole period of Nazi power and how helplessly even men of noble character confronted the categorical imperative of a crime conceived on this gigantic scale. When will the day come when a sense of shame for these infamies forces itself upon the widest circle of Christendom? If they can provide the initial impulse towards that, these words of mine will not have been written in vain.

PART III

JUDAISM AND THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Christianity and Anti-Semitism

THE dreadful tale that I have just unfolded raises a question to which a book of this kind must of necessity give some sort of a reply. In the horrors which I have just related clerics have on several occasions been involved—sometimes very deeply involved. How far were they representative of the general run of Churchmen? And what throughout the ages has been the attitude towards the Jews of the Church and of sincere professing Christians as a whole?

The answer is, I must confess, not consistently reassuring, though in more recent times there have been solid grounds for comfort and for hope. A new spirit is abroad and one that no longer does dishonour to the name of Christ. For one thing must surely be plain. A hostile attitude towards the Jews involves the Christian—be he Catholic or Protestant—who truly believes in his religion and is unwilling to deceive himself, in an intolerable contradiction.

This truth has not always been fully grasped. We have seen that as the Christian Church consolidated its position, an ever-growing enmity developed towards the Jewish people scattered, as they then were, all over the West. Even a man as holy and eminent as St Ambrose could approve the burning by the mob of the synagogue in Rome, could speak of it as a deed that carried God's blessing and call the Emperor Theodosius a Jew because he had ordered it to be rebuilt.

In much the same spirit St Bernard, when writing in 1135 to the Emperor Lothar, confessed to difficulty in reconciling

himself to the fact that, "to the shame of Christ", a sprig of Jewry was occupying the chair of Peter in the person of Anacletus II, as though St Peter himself had not been "a sprig of Jewry". Later this same St Bernard was to reverse his position in a rather curious fashion, for he was to attack the monk Radulf, when the latter began to agitate on the Rhine for a crusade against the Jews. Even today in occasional writings and sermons theologians speak of the fate of the Jews and their "wandering about among peoples who despise them" as a fitting punishment for the Crucifixion of Christ.

It is really as though St Paul had never written that epistle to the Romans in which he speaks of Jewry's past and future in words that are so clear and so full of meaning: ". . . it has ever been my wish that I myself might be doomed to separation from Christ if that would benefit my brethren, my own kinsmen by race. They are Israelites, adopted as God's sons; the visible presence, and the covenant, and the giving of the law, and the Temple worship and the promises, are their inheritance; the patriarchs belong to them, and theirs is the human stock from which Christ came" (Romans 9. 3-5). And in the same epistle the Apostle to the Gentiles warns Christians not to think themselves superior to the Jews, adding, "Thou owest thy life to the root, and not the root to thee".

We tend to be very short-sighted in these matters and so fail to grasp the deeper connections between things. How easy it is because of this to slip into the way of referring to the Jews as the murderers of God and to brand them as such. We do not realize how disastrously shallow is such a judgement as part of the framework of Christian thought and belief. For Origen the Jews were "Brothers of Christ" and the softening of their hearts depended on Christian example. We should never forget that in the main the first Church Fathers, moved by a true Christian conviction, tried earnestly to be thoroughly just to the Jews.

St Augustine shared their point of view, as did Pope Gregory the Great, who wrote to the Bishop of Naples that those who

were of a different religion must be won over to the Faith by gentleness, benevolence, persuasion and argument, and not repelled by threats. As to the Jews, men should seek to win them over by gentle treatment "so that they come to us instead of fleeing from us".

We must, however, admit that against such principles, born as they are of the true spirit of Christ, and against such conceptions of the Church's missionary function, there are to be set ideas and utterances of a number of men who held high—sometimes the highest—office in the Church and that these at times display a degree of hatred and a persecuting spirit which are well-nigh beyond belief. When dealing with the Jewish question and endeavouring to arrive at an objective estimate of the *pro* and *contra* in the Christian record, we simply cannot pass such things over in silence.

Pope Stephen, the successor of St Peter in the last quarter of the ninth century, did not scruple to call the Jews "dogs", and even Pope Innocent II threw a deep shadow over the great work of his life by his hatred of the Jews. He held that because of the Crucifixion of Christ, God had himself condemned them to slavery.

In partial contrast with the above stands the figure of Luther. In the second half of his life Luther was still wholly under the influence of the mediaeval conception that the Jews were incapable of conversion and deserved all the pains that were laid upon them. Nevertheless in a sermon on usury he preaches, not against the Jews, but against Christians. "The harshness and oppression of the Jews [*Die Schinderei der Juden*]," he rages, "was so much child's play compared with the avarice and usury which prevails not only among the clergy but also among the laity."

For the benefit, however, both of those outside the Church and of those within it, I cannot repeat too often that we can still see the universal character of the Church in what invariably followed these unchristian outbursts and attacks—namely honest declarations of remorse for such sins—and this led the

way to visible improvement and to the restoration of justice. Thus the treatment of Jews by Bishop Adalbert of Metz, a treatment that was wholly devoid of prejudice, caused a contemporary of his to say of him "*Judaeis etiam dilectissimus erat*", which means that the Jews displayed a great and sincere gratitude towards him. In the same town in the eleventh century a Benedictine named Siegbert let Jews interpret the Old Testament for him and earned great respect among them by his patience and understanding. That even in the thirteenth century Jews could obviously exercise influence among those in whose midst they lived is proved by the appearance of a number of Judaizing sects, especially in the south of France and northern Italy, though the same thing occurred in a number of other regions. Indeed the Catholic Church felt compelled to take energetic measure against such heresies.

Some words from Luther's essay "That Christ was born a Jew" are far from inapposite here. Luther remarks that if the apostles, who themselves were Jews, had treated the Pagans as Christians treat the Jews, those pagans would surely never have become Christians:

In so far as they dealt with us pagans in brotherly fashion, we should ourselves act in brotherly fashion towards the Jews, and thus mayhap convert a number of them. And however much we may boast ourselves, we are still pagans born, whereas the Jews are of the blood of Christ. We are brothers-in-law and strangers, they are blood relations, cousins and brothers to our Lord. Therefore if a man should boast of his flesh and blood, the Jews have a closer place to Christ than we. Moreover, God has proved by his deeds that he has done no nation among the heathen so great an honour as he has done the Jews.

Even after the Reformation the chief factors governing the relations between Christians and Jews were the personal characters of individual Christians and Christian groups. In the second half of the seventeenth century Philip Jacob Spener stresses the

fact that Jews had quite justifiably felt certain matters in Christian conduct to be a stumbling-block, the reduction, for instance, of Christianity to mere external observance and the failure to obey Jesus' commands. Here was a man who surely had found the right tone to use towards the Jews. In his essay "Mistaken thoughts on the way in which we should bear ourselves touching the conversion of the Jews", this writer expresses his strong disapproval of anything in the nature of the use of force against the Jews and of the questionable methods used at that time to bring about their conversion. Following St Paul's epistle to the Romans, he declares prayer and example to be the only worthy and permissible means for Christians when dealing with Jews. In his *Theologische Bedenken* (Theological Considerations) he goes so far as to advocate improvements in the economic position of Jews and suggests the creation of forming colonies as a means to this end.

But we can also find plenty of instances among Catholics of a similar lack of prejudice towards the Jews—from the far-sighted popes of the time of the Council of Trent right down to the present day. Leo XIII, for instance, in his Encyclical of 15th February 1882 urges both clergy and laity to treat all derogatory generalizations about the Jews as things to be condemned out of hand and energetically to reject anti-Semitism as something wholly contrary to the spirit of Christ. We can indeed safely say that in this matter the Catholic Church has in recent times taken a particularly unequivocal stand, a stand that grows ever more firm as time goes on, and that so far as anti-Semitism is concerned she often remains more faithful to the spirit of Christ than certain circles of German Protestantism, whose dependence on the state and whose subservience to spreading nationalism is often all too obvious.

In September 1938 Pope Pius XI received the representatives of a certain Belgian Catholic society and had something to say on the subject of anti-Semitism. He read certain passages from Holy Scripture and then said with tears in his

eyes, "There can be no better thing than these wonderful words. How can it ever be possible for a Christian to be an enemy of the Jews? No Christian can have anything to do with anti-Semitism, for we are all spiritually Semites."

II

Jewish Piety

I HAVE said something about the heroic loyalty of Israel to the one true God. Yet there are other aspects of Jewish religious life which, even in so brief a sketch as this, should find some mention if a balanced picture is to be obtained. That the Jew sought to love his God with all his heart and with all his mind and with all his strength is surely already evident, for where else could he have found that incomparable, that terrifying fidelity? What has been made less apparent is that he should have sought to love his neighbour as himself, nor have I said anything about his more intimate piety or of the gentler motions of the Jewish heart.

Before dealing with these subjects, however, I wish to touch on a matter which is of the very essence of Jewish spiritual life, and one, incidentally, which illustrates afresh a point made earlier in this book. In his *Judaism and Christianity* the great Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, who made a profound study of Hebrew literature and history and of the Hebrew tongue, was concerned to show, as I have been, that there was not only a spiritual preparation for the Incarnation in the development of Judaism, but that its whole treatment of the physical world contains a vague anticipation of that miracle. In the course of his argument Soloviev pointed out a number of highly important trends in Judaism's attitude to the material world which in the Jewish conception is permeated by the spiritual. He stresses the fact that Judaism knows of no dualism between body and spirit, and that, unlike Buddhism, it does not reject the

world of matter as an obstacle to spirituality. Rather does it honour the physical world as the divinely sanctified vessel of the spirit, which is also its sphere of exercise and action. He says:

From the very beginning the Jews recognized the material world's right to exist, though they did this without subjecting themselves to its blind power, and in the end the perfected flower of Judaism was considered worthy to serve God in giving him human form. Having this character, Judaism will one day become the active mediator for the spiritualizing of material life and will use nature for the creation of a new earth, on which truth will have its dwelling place.

Soloviev shows how this conception of the body as the serviceable vessel that does honour to the spiritual world is unmistakably and deliberately expressed in all the Jewish customs. Concerning this necessarily imperfect physical clothing of the spirit he has the following to say:

Whereas practical and theoretical materialism submits to matter as an unalterable fact, and whereas the dualist rejects matter as something evil, the religious realism of the Jews is entirely distinct from either attitude and treats material nature with careful attention and respect. It was not however their intention to let themselves be enslaved by it, but rather to use it as a means for serving the Supreme God. That was why they had, when dealing with material things, to distinguish between the clean and the unclean, between what was holy and what was vicious; only thus could they make of it a temple to the Supreme Being.

In Soloviev's view the idea of sanctified matter, and the care exercised in making that idea a reality, played a much more important part in the life of Israel than it did in that of any other people. It is in this context that we must view a considerable part of Mosaic legislation regarding the distinction between clean and unclean, and the rules to be observed in maintaining bodily cleanliness; indeed, one might say that the aim pursued

throughout the whole of Jewish history is to produce for the God of Israel, not only holy souls but sanctified bodies.

Here is something that must surely touch the Christian, for if we consider how the Jews perpetually strove to embody the Divine in concrete form and to cleanse and sanctify matter, we shall gain a new understanding of the fact that it was Israel more than any other nation that underwent a genuine preparation for the incarnation of the Divine Word. For both reason and piety must surely lead us to see that if God was to become man, there not only had to be a sanctified virginal soul—matter itself had to become pure and holy.

But now let me touch on something that lies at the very core of Judaism, the vivifying instrument by which through the ages the Jew has been sustained. I do so all the more readily because I am dealing with something that has been the subject of much embittered controversy, of much illiberal misunderstanding

In the history of the Christian faith we can discern two contrasting trends which in the final analysis supplement one another. One department of Christian piety is devoted to dogma and has as its object the ever more precise definition of the highest form of truth and of the grounds underlying the moral law. The other, which is no less indispensable and is complementary to the first, is concerned with the living expression of the piety of the heart—that very piety of which I am anxious to speak.

Exactly the same complementary interaction between religious dogma and religious life was developed in Judaism. The Old Testament is the authoritative document which illustrates this duality, which we also encounter in the Talmud and in the utterances of the Chasidim, whose ideas found their classical expression in the *Book of the Pious*. What we are concerned with here are two conceptions of religious reality which on the surface appear to differ fundamentally from one another but which are in actual fact of equal importance, and of which each

finds its completion in the other. This holds true despite the circumstance that they repeatedly underwent a tragic separation, so much so that "Talmudists" and "Chasidim" often confronted one another as though they were positive enemies, whereas each party should have consecrated itself to the fulfilment of the work of the other.

The Talmud, the contents of which have, as I pointed out, occasioned so many controversies, was an attempt to complete Jewish theology by means of casuistry. It is a collection of observations on the Jewish law and the conclusions to be drawn from it. We know that its essential portions had been completed by the sixth century A.D.

Enemies of the Jews have propagated all too widely an evaluation of Talmudic doctrine which is not only psychologically false but often quite deliberately misleading. Recognized Talmudic experts of all religions have been unanimous in rejecting such an assessment. And surely it is wholly unscientific for anybody to tear passages from the Talmud out of their context in order to satisfy a partisan bias and then to treat them as though they were complete in themselves; the truth is that for every such passage there is a complementary and explanatory text.

In only a few passages—they occur when the relations of Jews to other peoples are under consideration—are these "heathen" designated by the word *Goim*. An understandable sense of aversion towards their oppressors and persecutors does find expression here, an aversion that derives from a past that stretches back to remote periods of time. Even so, the unhistorical nature of the practice of thus tearing isolated passages of the Talmud out of their context is so obvious that there should not really be any difference of opinion about it. Moreover, it is surely downright absurd to hold against a modern Jew something that was said, 1,500 years ago and that was essentially designed to serve the purposes of casuistry. Take the ancient rules of any people and treat them as though they

had unlimited application. Where would such rules be immune from criticism?

Despite isolated sentences in which a sense of resentment and a lack of objectivity are obviously present, the humanity of the Talmudic legal teaching and of the Talmudic conception of life, must frequently excite our very real admiration. In these circumstances the views expressed on the Talmud by Rohling and other anti-Semites are surely nothing less than a blot on the Christian conscience.

We all know that prejudice can so distort a man's vision—and this can be true of men who are personally honourable—that his reactions become those of a fanatic and he is thus driven to the utterance of palpable untruth. When a man is under the spell of such influences and so cannot—or rather *will* not—understand what the Talmud actually says, he embarks on a career of mingled invention and misinterpretation and ends by concocting pamphlets which any conscientious expert can very easily explode. The aforesaid Professor Rohling's *Talmudjude* (The Talmud Jew) which had created a great stir in anti-Semitic circles, is a case in point. Franz Delitzsch, the well-known theologian, a man with a thorough knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic and the translator into Hebrew of the Gospels, had little difficulty in exposing Rohling's utter ignorance of the Talmud and his deliberate distortions and misinterpretations of Talmudic texts.

We must think of the Talmud as an encyclopaedia containing the views and opinions of the most diverse Jewish minds ranging over well-nigh ten centuries. It is therefore obvious that long and patient study is indispensable if we are to begin merely to find our bearings in this work. We should therefore be building on a foundation of sheer falsehood if we sought to equate the moral teaching of the Jews with the various casuistical passages which the Talmud contains, though critics of the Christian Church sometimes fall into the very error against which I am seeking to warn critics of Judaism. Even so conscientious a

spirit as Pascal was guilty of all too sweeping generalizations when he attacked the moral theories and casuistry of the Jesuits that are found in the folios of a Molina and an Escobar. The fact is that every people has its casuists, and that compared with some of these, the Hallachists of the Talmud are by no means markedly pre-eminent in devious ingenuity.

As most people know, the Hallacha forms the juridical part of the Talmud and is to be distinguished from the Haggada, which contains profound moral wisdom and a rich collection of legends. As an intellectual phenomenon, therefore, the Talmud occupies much the same place as Christian Scholasticism and of the casuistry which is so closely and so intimately bound up with it. Let us not forget that even in the latter there are many ludicrous and morally repulsive things to be found, and indeed Protestant and Old Catholic theologians have certainly managed to find them. They have then made the Catholic Church responsible for these aberrations, though there was no justification whatever for doing anything of the kind.

Among all civilized peoples we can observe the coexistence of two things, an essentially biased emotional trend—and an exaggerated tendency to rationalize. Both these things react strongly upon one another. Now if the Talmud is reproached for intolerance—and actually there are no grounds for such a charge—it is only right to draw attention to the fact that very marked intolerance is to be found in other religions—in Zoroastrianism, for instance. We also encounter the phenomenon from time to time both in Protestantism and in Catholicism—to say nothing of Islam. Think for a moment of the manner in which a Luther or a Calvin expressed himself.

The Talmud itself admits that excessive ingenuity in casuistry can lead to error, and it is true enough that there were Talmudists—particularly in the later ghettos—who got absorbed in a form of pettifoggery which was bound to affect the character of men preoccupied early and late with Talmudic texts. Such men were sometimes obsessed by their own

sophistical ingenuities to a degree where their intellects were positively devoured by this kind of study so that Holy Scripture, the Prophets and the Psalms were thrust wholly into the background.

This excess of over-ingenious dialectics went so far that as early as the fifteenth century complaints began to be heard that this cult was causing the study not only of Holy Scripture but also of the Haggada and the Midrash to be gravely neglected. Solomon Maimonides, who had grown up in the atmosphere of the Talmud and had been initiated into all the subtleties of Jewish casuistry, Spoke of the Haggada as a work in which "the strangest fantasies of the most subtle dialectic had been developed and the most absurd enquiries followed up in all too many volumes—and all at the expense of the greatest possible mental effort". Although, however, he states that the abstract principles in question only possess an imaginary reality in themselves and so do not satisfy a soul truly desirous of knowledge, he nevertheless rejects criticism that is unfounded and unfair and declares, "I could write a book if I were to refute all the unjust accusations made against the Talmudists by Christian writers and by Jews who claim to be enlightened, or to counteract all the ridicule the Talmudists have had to endure from them".

We must never lose sight of the fact that the study of the Talmud demands great concentration of thought, a detachment from all worldly things during the time of study and a religious devotion to tradition. We are indeed reminded of certain scholastics of the Middle Ages with whom the mere process of thought seemed to be an end in itself.

This Jewish casuistry of the Talmud however is completed and corrected by the Theosophy of the "Cabbala", for this gives expression to many things which, because of their metaphysical importance, are more likely to attract profounder minds among the Jews.

The moral teachings of the Talmud often reveal a lofty spirit

Sometimes they are like jewels wrapped up in straw, sometimes they flash like lightning through the mist that hangs over them. Like the moral philosophy of St Thomas, that of the Talmud shows an aversion to all things connected with commerce, while agriculture is viewed with especial favour. Rabbi Papas, for instance, declares: "Do not engage in commerce but rather cultivate the soil. Both occupations are good, but it is only the latter that brings a blessing on those who pursue it". Another rabbi declares: "Better a small portion of a field than a large portion in a warehouse". Such prudent recognition of the dangers that inhere in commerce, such a warning coming out of the very heart of Jewry, show us the Talmud for what it is and make us see in it those peculiar perceptive powers which have already been the subject of comment in this book.

Sometimes the moral teaching of the Talmud attains heights that surprise the Christian reader, who is, on perusing it, bound to recognize a close approximation to Christian teaching on forgiveness and love for one's enemies—in such passages as that, for instance, in which mention is made of those who are insulted but refrain from any insult in return, who suffer willingly and do not murmur. Such men, we are told, "will shine as friends of God like the morning sun". The Talmud also tells of the Rabbi Mar Zutra that every evening on retiring to rest he said, "I forgive all those who have wrought evil against me", while Rabbi Nathan is reported to have answered the question "What man is strong?" with the words, "He is strong who can turn an enemy into a friend".

Yet another rabbi taught, "If a friend needs thy help in loading up, first help thine enemy, so that the evil impulse may be mastered". Elsewhere in the Talmud we read, "The righteous among all peoples have a portion in the world to come", and also, "A heathen who does good out of the fullness of his heart is worth as much as a high priest in Israel".

There is a passage in the "Sanhedrin" tract which surely is nothing less than deeply moving. "On the day on which the

Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea the angels wished to sing a song before God, but God said to them, 'The work of my hands is drowning in the sea—and ye wish to sing?' " There is something of the same spirit in a practice which is probably known to most people and according to which the Jewish liturgy omits the great daily hymn of praise on precisely that day when, according to tradition, the Egyptians, the deadly enemies of the Jews, were drowned.

I draw the reader's attention—and I cannot do so too emphatically—to the profound significance of what I have just related, for it illustrates in a most striking manner the intimate connection between the Old Testament and the New. Indeed these things might well be held to give us an even more profound understanding of the Sermon on the Mount and to enable us to see it in the light of the Old Testament and of post-Christian Jewish literature. The manner in which in the above-quoted text compassion is shown for the fate of the Egyptians drowned in the sea, and all triumph forbidden the Jews who had been saved by that event, is surely quite unique. It is a part of all that which I have called, elsewhere, "The Mystery of Israel!"

In yet another passage of the Talmud it is said that the prophets possessed one distinctive mark which set them apart from the leading men of other nations; they felt themselves bound to show compassion towards all other nations, without exception, both in thought and deed.

It is true that Jewish casuistry sometimes tends to fall into a certain moral relativism in its attempt to reconcile—sometimes in all too daring a fashion—uncompromising moral demands with a reality that tends to be at variance with them. Thus the righteous are expressly given certain special privileges against the godless. This leads to the formulation of the principle that a man should behave "purely" towards the "pure" but perversely towards the perverse. Yet was it not the rule in the Christian Middle Ages that a man need not keep his word to a heretic? Nor must we ever forget that the Talmud nowhere takes a

stand against Christians or Christianity—only against “apostates”. Such exhibitions of polemics as Luther indulged in against the Catholic faith would for the Talmudist have been impossible.

Despite all that has been said, the character of the Jewish moralists in the Middle Ages is to a very great extent free from casuistical fog and for the most part these men very definitely sought to be just towards Christians. Rabbi Hai, one of the teachers at the school of Pumbedita in the eleventh century, declared that, according to the Talmud, every Jew was compelled to accept the truth from every man.

In the thirteenth century Solomon ben Moses ben Jekutiel taught that it was entirely wrong to pass contemptuous judgments on the sacrifice of the Mass, the Trinity, or any other matter pertaining to the Christian faith—and this included the alleged bad behaviour of the Christian clergy, for the Jews, like anybody else, owed that clergy respect. Much the same spirit can be discerned in the saying of Mose Isserles of Cracow, one of the orthodox ritualists of the sixteenth century, that he remembered the covenant of the fathers, by which not only “our own” fathers are meant but which we may understand as including all men who sincerely strive for good. Spinoza goes much further when, in writing to Oldenburg in 1675, he says, “The son of God, that is to say the Divine Wisdom, manifested himself more powerfully than anywhere else in Jesus Christ”

The attacks which Jewish *littérateurs* from time to time bring against Christianity are rejected by serious Jews. These writers who have taken the poisoned weapons of their atheism from the arsenal of Western materialism are regarded by serious Jews as excrescences against whom Christian and Jew are as helpless as is the Christian himself against the effects of the spirit of the age—as helpless as that same Christian would have been against the mockery of Voltaire or the attacks of the Encyclopaedists.

May I quote just a few more examples of the lofty way of thinking that found expression among orthodox Jews?

Here are some words of Jechiel ben Jekutiel ben Benjamin who taught in the second half of the thirteenth century:

Love the stranger as much as thou lovest thy neighbour, think always how thou mayest do good things for him, speak kindly of him and do not seek to spy out his faults. . . . Do good to every man whether he be worthy of this or no, for even if he does not deserve thy goodness, thou owest it to God to practise it towards him. As a man desires that his fellow men should act towards him, so let him show himself in his actions towards others. Humility enjoins that we should suffer wrong without returning it, that we should master our anger and live in peace with our neighbour. We should bear ourselves thus to those who are not of Jewry as well as to Jews. Should ye think that ye owe honesty only to Jews, because these act in brotherly fashion towards you, then reflect that all our great teachers have warned us against such a doctrine and declared that it is forbidden to deal dishonestly with any man even though he be not a Jew. Elsewhere the same teacher says, "If one who is not a Jew builds upon your word and on the doing of that word, ye must observe faith and honour in your dealings with him, so that God's name is sanctified through you.

Very similar are the words of the testament of Rabbi Ascher who lived in the first half of the fourteenth century: "Be upright and true towards every man, whether he be a Jew or no. Greet every man without distinction of faith and give him who is of another faith no cause for anger." The lofty way of thinking and the high moral standards that we find among orthodox Jews have their counterpart in the rules and exhortations relating to such matters as sexual life, hygiene and moderation in eating and drinking. Werner Sombart declares that the widely practised continence among Orthodox Jews is the real explanation of the stored up energy displayed by them in business and other fields.

Solomon Maimonides, when speaking in his biography of the many prohibitions that are designed to govern the sexual life of the Jews writes as follows: "In her husband's eyes the

wife remains that which she was in the eyes of her lover". The following sentence, written on the strength of much painstaking observation, occurs in the celebrated book *Maier Jesofowicz*, a book which, though concerned with a purely Jewish destiny, was written by a Christian lady: "Such was the purity of morals among these people that, despite their grey hairs, they blushed with shame when there was so much as a mention of an illicit relationship between a man and a woman".

There was always unlimited respect in the Jewish ghetto for religious people and for those distinguished by religious knowledge. Talmudic learning was accounted a far more important thing than riches and endowed those who possessed it with the stamp of nobility. The ability to point to an ancestor who was a distinguished Talmudist lent special lustre to any Jewish family. So true was this, that wealthy Jewish families made a point of ensuring that their sons devoted themselves to religious studies, to the study that is to say of rabbinical theology; for every rabbi inspired reverence, as one who concerned himself with spiritual and not with worldly things and as a torch-bearer for religious truth. Thus Maimonides writes in his afore-mentioned biography: "Riches, physical endowments, talents of all kinds—all these things are duly valued among the Jews and are prized to a relatively high degree, but nothing surpasses the dignity that is felt to attach to a good Talmudist and it is the latter who has first claim on all the community's offices and places of honour". Whatever his age and whatever his ancestry, all rise respectfully in his presence and everywhere he is given the highest place. He is, in a sense, the ordinary man's lawgiver and judge. Whosoever fails to show sufficient respect when encountering such a man of learning is, according to the Talmudists' own words, "damned for all eternity". Did not the Jews of old themselves declare that all men should rise when a wise man comes in sight and that they should not sit down till he has passed from view?

This Jewish habit of always giving the supreme place to

those preoccupied with the things of the spirit, recalls some advice given to Maimonides by his father. The latter interpreted the Talmud commentary on the story of Jacob and Esau as implying that Esau had chosen the good things of a purely worldly existence while Jacob had chosen the blessings of a life wholly dedicated to God. Since, then, the Jews are descended from Jacob they should not place an excessive value on worldly goods. Much the same spirit animates the words of a Jewish nineteenth-century merchant who declared that he regarded anybody who had learnt nothing and had never studied as nothing more than an ordinary person, even though in other respects he might be the best of men. All this finds expression as far back as the *Nizzaachom* of Rabbi Lipman of the year 1410. There we are told that the love of God and the fear of God stand in a deeply founded relationship to the knowledge of God.

Such reverence for all that pertains to religion extends—and in this there is surely a profound propriety—even to the external usage of religious books. Indeed one may surely say that such correspondence between the inward life and external action is in harmony with the deepest essence of Jewish religious life.

In view of what I have said, it seems to me that nothing could shed a clearer light on this problem than to supplement—as I propose to do in the pages that follow—what I have written about the Talmud with a document which at first appears to derive from a world opposed to that work, but which in actual fact serves as its indispensable completion. Indeed fundamentally this latter document does nothing more than think through and work out the inward application of the Talmud—all being done in a spirit of obedience to the Talmud's supreme directives. This simple psychological fact should never be lost sight of when—though it is not my purpose here to evaluate the Chasidim movement as a whole—I introduce the reader to a number of sayings that can be found in Jehuda ben Samuel

Hachassid's *Book of the Pious*. I would nevertheless like to revert to what I have already said and emphasize the fact once again that in the unique character of the Talmud, and in the manner of its application to Jewish life, there is undeniably apparent a deep reverence for the unseen world and a deep metaphysical longing. We should always bear this in mind when Christian critics start to generalize and to contrast "Christian spirituality" with "Jewish materialism".

The Book of the Pious

I WILL make no attempt here to go into any detail about the historical facts of the Chasidim movement—indeed the facts are sufficiently well known—nor will I dwell on its theological tenets or discuss the literary output—which was undeniably high—of its various representatives. I do, however, want to say something of Jehuda Hachassid's *The Book of the Pious* which occupies a rather special place in the so-called "Mussar literature", for an examination of the relevant Talmud texts may make a real contribution to the solution of the Jewish problem.

Let me begin with the introduction to that book:*

This book [so runs the text] is named *The Book of the Pious*. It is written for those who fear God and honour His name; for this is a book in which the pious man should read whose heart is filled by the love of God, who seeks to do His will but does not know all the many things which must be observed nor those of which he must beware, nor how he should act, down to the very last detail, so as to conform to the divine will, knowledge of such matters being today much diminished. Since he is already pious, he will take to heart the teaching which he receives from the book. It was not written for evil-doers; these, when they look into the book, will deem what is written therein to be untrue and will mock at

*The quotations from *The Book of the Pious* are taken from the works that have appeared in the German language: (1) Sulzbach, *Die Ethik des Judentums* (The Ethics of Judaism), Frankfurt, 1923; (2) Zunz, *Geschichte der Poetischen Kabbalistischen und neuzeitlichen Literatur der Juden* (History of the Poetic, Cabbalistic and more recent Literature of the Jews), Trèves, 1896, pp. 631 ff.

it. Does not Solomon say, "Speak nothing for the hearing of fools, for they will despise thy understanding words"?*

The Mussar literature, to which I have just referred, consists of handbooks on ethics, social intercourse, education, family life, health care, treatment of animals, purity and so forth. The actual religious element in these books is interwoven with extracts from Greek philosophers, from recounters of Indian fables and, at a later stage, with passages from Arabic literature. The purpose of this Mussar literature is not the cultivation of the intellect but the ennobling of the character and the culture of the heart.

Here are some quotations from *The Book of the Pious*:

Even as thou must observe honesty towards the Jew, thou must observe it towards the Christian.

To deceive or rob a Christian is a greater sin than to do the same to a Jew. To act dishonestly towards any man is a sin. But to practise deceit upon a Christian causes the whole of Jewry to suffer. As matters stand, the crime of one Jew is made out to be the crime of all. Thus the deception of one who is not a Jew is a crime against the whole of Jewry.

When a bond is entered into between Jews and others for mutual aid, the first must render such aid if the second observe the bond.

In thy dealings with those who are not of Jewry be zealous to use the same honesty as thou wouldst use with Jews. If one who is not a Jew commit an error, make it known to him. It is better to live from alms than to run away with another's money, for this brings shame upon Jewry and upon the Jewish name.

*In the introduction to his book *Die Ethik des Judentums* Sulzbach writes: "What is here taught by Jehuda Hachassid in what are often loosely connected sentences is a system of Jewish ethics that has grown out of the Torah and out of the Talmudic-Rabbinical writings which elucidate it and in this the Mussar Literature has also been used." According to Sulzbach we only possess fragments of the *Book of the Pious*. Jehuda Hachassid wrote two books: *Sefer Hakabod* (The Book of Heavenly Glory) and *Sefer Hachassid* (The Book of the Pious).

If one who is not a Jew seeks thy counsel, then declare to him who it is that acts and speaks honestly in the place where he that enquires of thee hopes for aid—and who it is that is a deceiver.

If thou seest one of thine own faith who is a stranger commit a sin, then prevent it if thou hast the power to do so and let the Prophet Jonah be thy example here.

If a man would do right, then let him marry a proselyte of as good character as himself—modest, full of good works and honest—rather than marry a girl of Jewish family to whom these virtues are not native.

Do not willingly listen to slander, but seek rather to touch the conscience of any man who complains of another in thy presence. If thou speakest of another, speak good of him, but do not do so in the presence of his enemies who will make this an occasion for speaking all that is in their minds concerning his faults. Likewise do not praise a rich man in the presence of one who is also rich, nor a scribe in the presence of a scribe. In short, praise no man in the presence of one who is of the same calling save only that thou mayest praise one who fears God in the presence of another who also fears God.

Beware of speaking contemptuously of any man or of mocking him, but if thou hast so spoken or so mocked, then make haste to be reconciled to him.

Answer no man with a loud and insolent voice but do so modestly and remove thyself silently from the company of idle mockers, for mockery leads to lewdness and lewd talk to lewd deeds. Call no man to answer when thou art sure that he will not truly hearken to thee or when, if thou doest so, he may be moved to hatred and revenge.

If any man revile thee, be silent and suffer not thy disciples or those of thine household to visit him that hath offended thee with blows or abuse.

Pious is he who suffers affronts and slander but all the while remains deaf and dumb, who lends no ear to those that abuse him and offers no affront in return. The time will come when such a

man's eyes will sparkle and in the next world he will dwell with those who are worthy of nearness to God.

Be not over-pious, for it is this especially that leads to unlawful deeds.

Note this especially: no man should serve his Creator because he expects thereby to obtain a portion in Paradise. Rather should he do so out of pure love for Him and because he loves the fulfilling of His commandments.

The root of piety is the fear of God—not in the sense that a man should cling to piety because he fears divine punishment or because he fears the loss for all eternity of the joys of this world and the next; rather should he do so because he fears that he could suffer hurt in his moral being if through lack of devotion he should not wholly lose himself in the divine will, according to the word "Thou shalt be wholly with God"—wholly with God, that is to say, through thy loving surrender to Him. Only he who fears after this fashion may truly be said to fear God.

If a rich man and a poor one are both sick and thou seest that men visit the rich, then go to the poor one, even if he be not learned; but where a learned man is in need of alms and a poor one of honour, thou shouldst give preference to the first of these, save only when the poor and unlearned man truly fears God, while the learned one does not. Should this last be true, then give honour to the love of God. Further, seek the company of an unlearned man who is generous rather than that of a learned one who is niggardly.

No blessing is on a fortune made by those who oppress their labourers, buy stolen goods and choose furniture for their homes with needless adornment. They or their children will lose it.

If thou art able to maintain thyself with the little that thou hast, seek not to become rich by accepting from others, for most of those who take from others have no good fortune. No blessing is on the money of those who engage in usury, who traffic deceitfully with weights and measures and are dishonest in their business; their children and accomplices will be compelled to leave the land and

to beg for their bread. But many a man will also become poor who himself treats the poor with contempt, who rebuffs them with hard words or answers those who ask of him with the words, "I will give nothing to one who can work." Such a man should rather let the poor have the benefit of the money he would otherwise squander on useless things, such as the birds which he keeps. If a man shows compassion, then to such a man will compassion be shown by God. The man who knows no compassion is like unto the beasts of the field who care naught for the suffering of their own kind.

Be as chaste in secret as thou art up on the market place and in the street, for the wood and stone in the walls of thy chamber are two witnesses which will appear against thee.

Let the thought that thou art dust and to dust thou wilt return guard thee against every unchaste motion of the heart.

Three kinds of men especially deserve our compassion: the man of sense who is governed by a madman, the good man who is subject to an evil-doer, and the man of noble mind who is dependent on a wretch. There are, however, three other kinds of men who are unworthy of compassion: the cruel man who is pitiless in his evil-doing, the man who heedlessly rushes to his own destruction and the man without gratitude.

Say not "I will be revenged for the evil that has been done me", but pray to God for help.

The greatest of all faults is ingratitude. Even the practice thereof towards beasts can never be lawful. He also is worthy of punishment who loads his beast with immoderate burdens, who beats it or tortures it, who pulls a cat's ears or uses spurs to his horse. A sick beast, or one that is carrying young, should be gently used. If a dog that is harmless runs into thy house, chase it away with a small whip but beware of beating it with a stick. He who harshly uses his manservants or his maids will have even more to answer for.

If thou hast need of a companion for thy studies and thou findest a youth, who, though good and a lover of silence, is mocked at by the wanton, then choose such a youth, if he be willing, to be thy

friend and disciple, for those who have been undeservedly thrust back shall be exalted.

If any man should counsel thee to wear an amulet as a means of gaining favour and riches, heed him not, but place thine undivided trust in God. For it were apostasy if, should thy plans miscarry, thou shouldst seek out another Lord than the eternal one who is thy God.

If thou hast been deceived by false weight, if thou hast been robbed or had false witness borne against thee, be not tempted to seek revenge by doing likewise.

There are many things which are not theft but are worse than theft.

Refrain from all loud and violent speech, guard especially against all lies and oaths, all mockery and all unbridled desires. A lust for revenge cannot be reconciled with a humble heart.

Beware of pride and be zealous in humility. Account thyself as nothing, make thyself small and in all matters be thou the last. Also do not say or write "I and he" but "he and I".

Learn from the threshold; it is trodden upon but it remains, even if the whole house fall down.

The Book of the Pious lays down certain rules for the treatment of religious books. Sacred writings must not be used for the making of personal notes. They must not be placed on a footstool or on the bed. While they are lying open, no one may show their nakedness nor must anyone give way to reckless and violent speech.

In the supplementary text we are told that it is better to spend one's money on clothes for the poor than to use it for having copies made of the Torah rolls. In this *The Book of the Pious* comes very close to the spirit of St Francis who asked his disciples to give away the only copy of the Gospel they possessed to any woman that asked for it; for it was better to live the Gospel than to read it.

I must admit that I have scarcely furnished adequate material for a true comparison between *The Book of the Pious* and the books of Moses, the books that contain the laws of the Jewish people and the judgements implicit therein. I have only given a modest impression of the nature of the counsels given in the aforesaid book and of their relevance in a supposed comparison of this kind. Yet I am anxious to establish one point with especial force. It is that we are confronted here with something very weighty and great, with an art of interpretation that rises to the level of positive genius, an art of interpretation concerned with those higher laws and ordinances which wonderfully elucidates their deeper meaning and makes us aware of them as a personal blessing to us all—an art, moreover, which succeeds in doing this at that very point where the concrete difficulties of our human conflicts begin and where in a world of unpredictable change we are thrown back entirely upon character and steadfastness, qualities without which we are bound to succumb to the dictatorship of the transient moment and to the overwhelming temptations that it so often puts in our way. It is only when we immerse ourselves in these concrete solutions of concrete problems that the whole grandeur of those higher ordinances becomes apparent.

Jewish Faults and their Causes

SOME pages back I had occasion to refer to Vladimir Soloviev and his writings. I wish to do so again—to certain passages in particular that occur in his *The Jewish Question—a Christian Question* in which he seeks particularly to touch the Christian heart.

Soloviev has no sort of doubt that the hidden powers of the Jewish people, and the will of that people which is wholly directed towards the sovereignty of God, will yet produce great things for Christian culture if only we can succeed in making Jewry forget all its terrible memories and cause it to rise superior to the results of nearly two thousand years of oppression.

For this to be achieved, however, it is necessary that Christians should really become Christians, that they should turn the love of Christ into an active working reality—particularly when they deal and debate with Jews. It is in this sense that the “Jewish question” is above all a “Christian question” and the very first thing for Christians to do is to recognize the wrongs they have done to the Jewish people, wrongs which they still continue to do to that people in the written as in the spoken word. It is also necessary that they should cease to reproach the Jew with faults for which they themselves bear the ultimate responsibility.

What is the nature of these faults? Let us before all else recognize the fact that they are faults that are connected with great and positive qualities, faults which have their origin in the heavy historical fate of a people that has been scattered all over the

world and which derive in a quite special manner from Jewry's position in the modern economic order. Thus they are faults for which the Christian peoples must bear a heavy measure of blame. Since that is so, the manner in which many Christians speak just of these particular faults is in a quite special sense unchristian, for that very refinement of conscience that Christianity is supposed to bring along with it, should surely have dictated a *nostra culpa, nostra maxima culpa* and so have lent a subdued and considerate tone to any condemnatory judgement we might otherwise have felt inclined to utter.

In his *The Nervous Character*, Adler shows how people who because of some blemish are afflicted by a feeling of inferiority—which means in effect that they tend to be regarded as inferior by other people—develop an uneasy urge towards compensation; they make all kinds of efforts—often to a positively pathological degree—to “throw their weight about”, to attain power over others, to exaggerate beyond all reason the importance of their own person. This observation brings home to us how large is the part played in human nature by the need for self-respect and for the respect of others and how necessary it is that this need should be treated with sympathetic understanding. What is said here in reference to individuals is equally true of whole peoples when these are downtrodden and despised. As among individuals so among whole peoples there tends to develop a sickness of self-feeling. Such people strive with well-nigh pathological intensity to find a kind of artificial compensation for the stigma of inferiority which has been attached to them.

If we are to understand the development of such morbid conditions of self-feeling among Jews, we must surely call to mind the enormous story of shame and dishonour that Jewry drags about with it, the more than barbaric disdain and ill-treatment to which it has been exposed—a story that stands in such sharp contrast to the high tradition of the Jews, to the greatness of their gifts, and to the pride which they deservedly feel in these

things. In the Middle Ages it was the practice in many cities publicly to box the ears of a Jew on Easter Sunday. One need only think of one such humiliation for many things to be made plain. Those who resent an irreverent attitude on the part of the modern Jew towards Christianity seem wholly to forget what for many centuries the Jew has endured at the hands of Christians and in the name of Christianity. They forget that these things have burned themselves into the memory of whole generations and poisoned thought and feeling.

It is not nearly sufficiently known how rightless the Jews remained till well into the nineteenth century—and in Eastern Europe till the twentieth.* They were like penguins on some uninhabited island which sailors can kill by the thousand for no better reason than the promptings of an evil whim.

In view of this story of misery and shame it is hardly to be wondered at that when in the nineteenth century they left the ghetto and all its memories behind them, when, thanks to the aptitudes they had developed in the school of the Talmud and in the field of finance, they now rose to the foremost places in the mathematics of banking and commerce—and also in that of modern Biblical criticism—it is, I say, not to be wondered at that when these things began to happen to them, and when, by reason of them, they began to attain full civic equality and even social power, many Jews experienced something like a feeling of intoxication. Yet mingled with this was a burning desire to be accepted among cultured and civilized people. Carried away as they were by these strangely mingled emotions, it is surely not astonishing that they should have begun to experience that sense of inner insecurity which—alas—is still a characteristic of many emancipated Jews.

There is yet another Jewish characteristic which we would do well to scrutinize. It is one which is often regarded as one of the efficient causes of anti-Semitism, though people who put it

*Cf. R. Saitschick, *Die rechtliche Stellung der Juden im Mittelalter* (The Juridical Position of the Jews in the Middle Ages).

forward as an excuse for their own anti-Semitic sentiments seem wholly to forget the extent to which the treatment that Jews have experienced down the centuries has affected them, and that, but for that treatment, this trait in the Jewish character would never have run riot in the way it sometimes has.

What I have in mind is the all permeating passion for monetary gain, a passion that in the type of Jew to which I refer seems to colour all human relations. Moses knew only too well that an effective counterpoise to the tremendous vital energy of the Jew, an energy that tended always to direct itself towards tangible things, could only be created in one way: by diverting men completely from all thought of worldly gain, by educating them to a life of uninterrupted sacrifice for God and by carrying out this change in so complete a manner that a man's whole life was governed by it.

Moses superbly achieved his purpose. Josephus tells us how during the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans the Jews kept the Sabbath despite the proximity of the enemy and despite the fact that by doing so they were throwing away many military advantages. After the Roman conquest the priests did not flee but continued quietly to offer the holy sacrifice.

If you want to understand the real nature of Jewish history since the destruction of Jerusalem, then try to make some words of Gustav Freytag call up a picture before your mind, for Freytag had grasped the real inwardness of that history with all the intuition of a true poet.

Privileged by imperial law, yet helpless before any local tribunal, at one and the same time indispensable and yet an object of deep-seated hate, desired and yet cursed, daily in danger of fire, murder and robbery, and yet again the silent master of the goods and welfare of hundreds, his position had about it an unnatural air of adventure, though his calling seemed sober enough. Set in the midst of a swarm of Christians, yet, for all that, separated from them by a barrier of steel, the Jew lived a double life. All the pride of noble blood and high talents, all the glow of Southern sensitivity, every

gentle passion, and every dark one too, surrounded his home, his family and his community; before the Christian, however, he was cold, dogged, fearful—he crawled and lay in wait, bowed down by the burden of a thousand years.

We must try to understand how in the Middle Ages the scattered communities were boxed in in the midst of a surrounding society which in culture and spiritual tradition was often greatly their inferior, how—not altogether surprisingly—they felt themselves superior to that surrounding society, and yet knew themselves to be hated, despised and threatened by it, knew themselves to be regarded as its deadliest enemy. These things have left their marks. Throughout centuries the Jew has trained himself to mulct his enemy as heavily as possible and to give him as little as he can; an easy-flowing reciprocity with the Gentile and the acceptance of a common ethical code—these were things which he was only to know at a later stage, though once the new relationship was established, his conduct in regard to it was as exemplary as that of other people. When formulating our attitude towards the Jew, we cannot do other than see him within the framework of these brutal facts. To do less is unworthy of us as representatives of Christian culture.

I spoke just now of the eagerness of the Jew to be accepted as a full-ranking citizen of his country, and elsewhere of his readiness to pay his footing in the currency of good conduct and good citizenship. It is one of the many tragedies of Jewry that so many of its people in their zeal for service to their adopted homeland have tended to overpay this account and in doing so have all too often sacrificed what should have remained inviolate. Yet how broad has been the road to that unwisdom, and how fatally easy the descent to that ultimate and inevitable catastrophe.

Whoever has visited the ancient Jewish cemetery in Worms has surely not looked upon this most ancient memorial of Jewish settlement in the German West without deep emotion. Ancient ivy spreads its dark green branches over weather-beaten stones.

and when we come to this place where six centuries of Jewish life are united in everlasting sleep, we can understand what was felt by the Jew who had wandered over the whole earth when at last he had found, as he then believed, a lasting home. It was spiritual needs. A most inspiring symbol of that common destiny between two peoples who were in a special way devoted to man's spiritual needs. A most inspiring symbol of that common destiny was the connection which became established in the first half of the nineteenth century between the Jewish *élite* and the Humboldt family.

When at this time Rachel von Varnhagen coined the phrase "Nothing binds so firmly as the grant of freedom", she was not only expressing her thanks for the emancipation of the Jews but formulating the contrary principle to that Prussian authoritarianism which even at that time was already forging the weapons with which it was to do battle with western Europe. For the Jew this time represented the sunrise of equal human rights. He lifted himself up out of the immeasurable misery of a degraded birth and directed his whole energy and intelligence to the overcoming of his secular inferiority complex.

At last his longing seemed to have been fulfilled. He began to conquer one after another of the territories that had been closed to him. He co-operated and had his part in all the great discoveries of German science and finally rose to a position where he was recognized as Germany's most expert adviser on matters of world trade.

Yet when at last everything had been won, Hitler came; the German Jews were not merely forced back into a position of extreme humiliation but condemned like vermin to a mass death. What a fate for a people! What a drama!—a drama that cries to heaven! When at the end of the Second World War I read the authoritative accounts of Hitler's war of extermination against the Jews, I was reminded of an old prophecy made in the monastery of Lehnin, for there at the end of the Middle Ages

an abbot had foretold that a crime of such enormity would one day be perpetrated in Germany that it could only be expiated by death (*infandum nefas—morte piandum*).

It was indeed a tragic turning point when the German Jew, deeply committed as he was to his own spiritual tradition—and yet eager to serve his native country, Germany—found himself confronted with the choice of either associating himself with the new German mania for power or of keeping faith with that same holy tradition of his, that wonderful and mysterious co-operation between human and divine which is called the Old Testament. All too many Jews failed to keep this faith but, instead, have entered enthusiastically into the service of the neo-German Nationalism, though this was nothing less than a betrayal of all the greatest traditions of Germany herself. The result, as is now becoming plain to many whom that nationalism had bewitched, was in the end as disastrous for the Jews as it was for the Germans, who had fallen into the unholy error that they could become masters of the world if they succeeded in betraying their greatest spiritual heritage.

The terrifying extent to which certain leading Jews had fallen under the sway of the worst type of neo-German nationalism can be seen from two quotations which I propose to make, the full import of which cannot possibly be lost upon the reader. We can read in Romain Rolland's diaries that during the First World War no less a man than Maximilian Harden could bring himself to say "Away with hypocrisy! We want power and world dominion! and our might is our right. Let us stop lying about our peaceful intentions. We are warlike and want battle and might!"

Another example of the same thing can be found in some words of deputy Heilman, himself a Jew. In a letter addressed to Kurt Eisner, and dated 7th August 1914, Heilman wrote this: *

*Printed in *Die Zeit*, February 1933.

I think that this time you are taking too sombre a view of things. Once France is hurled to the ground—and we really cannot at this stage run after the French with peace offers—then Sweden, Roumania and Turkey can wrestle with Russia and they will have not the slightest difficulty in throwing her. Naturally England will on this occasion get away with it, but since, as is to be hoped, we shall continue to stick in Antwerp, she will in the future have little to laugh about.

At present we can really only write in a nationalistic vein. At least a million of our electors are in the field. Are we to make the hearts of their dependants heavy by telling them that these people are being uselessly sacrificed?

Can one trace in the utterly naïve neo-German nationalism of this deservedly respected Jewish politician even the smallest trace of faithfulness to the ethical spirit of his Jewish tradition?

May I hope that the aberrations to which I have just referred will provide serious-minded Jews with ample food for thought. It may then well be that they will meet new temptations, when these arise, with a truly resolute avowal of their loyalty to what is best and most holy in their own historical heritage. Had they done this when faced with the mighty temptations of the neo-German era of war-mongering, they would have rendered a true and lasting service to their German friends instead of so senselessly confirming them in their fatal illusions.

The tragedy of the neo-German Jew is admittedly much the same as that of a great many Christians, and neither Jew nor Christian is in this case entirely free from blame for the fate which has since overtaken them. Both have let themselves be seduced by their enthusiasm for Germany's rise to power and for the great qualities that helped to contribute to that rise. Moral theology speaks in such cases of a "disordered love", a love that lacks a firm and clear hierarchy of ends. Both Christian and Jew have tended all too often to give the doctrine of *Realpolitik* their uncritical approval and to associate themselves wholeheartedly with its practical application. Only when it was

much too late did they realize—and they did so with horror—to what manner of powers they had given their blessing, what doors they had opened, what basic inhibitions they had destroyed—and all because they had failed to offer any serious moral resistance to what was taking place.

They have had no thanks for this; on the contrary, all their services to an evil cause, all the betrayals of their own best traditions, have but served to worsen their case. All the blind pleading in foreign countries for confidence in a Germany—whose ultimate intentions and true spiritual dispositions were only known to a few far-seeing minds—did not prevent their ultimate extrusion from the community. All it did was to strengthen and encourage that special brand of German nationalism to which in the end they themselves were to fall victims.

We see this tragedy working itself out in the life of a Ballin and a Rathenau; both were men who, in the sacrifice of their moral judgement when faced with the record of Germany's quest for power, had almost wholly divested themselves of their Judaism. Both in one way or another lived to see that their treason to their own best principles had been completely vain. Both were to live through the hour when they received their parting kick and when it suddenly became plain to them that they had consecrated their brains and strength to a Germany that did nothing but squander its enormous moral and spiritual inheritance—and a vast amount of idealism into the bargain—for something that was a miserable negation of every spiritual value, and for short-sighted power politics.

The fate of all too many German Christians who were nationalist in their politics is very similar, and it may in times to come approximate much more closely to that of the Jews than is at present the case. They too have sacrificed to the cause of German nationalism much more of their patrimony than they should. Indeed their approval of nationalism's worst excesses and of its most anarchic consequences in the First and

Second World Wars lays on them part of the blame for all that finally happened when that same German nationalism held the whole German people in its thrall. Too late did they realize the true nature of the thing they had cosseted and in whose triumph they had rejoiced, namely Germany's so-called "rise to national greatness". Only then, when the thing struck at the root of their personal lives, did they begin to see with horror that what they had honoured as the "rise of a Christian Germany" was nothing but the well-concealed triumph of Antichrist, of whom it is written in the Gospel, "He shall deceive even the elect".

What has deceived almost all Christians and Jews, German and other, is the fact that so many virtues, both Christian and German, were made to serve a process that was essentially neither German nor Christian but the very opposite of these things and that the great qualities of a richly endowed people were misused for increasingly miserable ends. For the tragedy of this neo-German development lies precisely in this: that Christianity placed itself in the service of Antichrist, moral excellence in that of the deepest immorality, order in that of anarchy, and organization in that of the dissolution of Europe.

Yet all this accords with the visions of the Apocalypse which show how the collective beast can cast a spell over the very virtues even of Christians and Jews and can make them serviceable to godless ends. Only deception on the most gigantic scale could make the transient triumph of the nether powers possible, and the guilt of so many German Christians and Jews before the bar of world history consists in the very fact that they allowed themselves to be made accomplices in such aberrations through a disordered and unbaptized love of their own people; they thus became the victims of a short-sighted patriotism which failed correctly to recognize the moral foundations of the state. In consequence of this they lost the power to distinguish between the powers working from above and those that worked from below. "Ye know not of what spirit ye be." Yet whosoever keeps the highest good constantly before his eyes will never make any

mistake about the facts when the hierarchy of values is turned upside down. The real "treason of the clerks" lay in their apparent failure to recognize that they and they alone had been entrusted with that hierarchy's custody. Will they now at last understand what reparation is due from them—and I speak of both groups, the defecting German Christians and the defecting German Jews.

In the figures of Ballin and Rathenau I have just exemplified a certain type of Jew. The example of a diametrically opposite type is provided by R. E. May, an orthodox Jew, who also operated from Hamburg and was in a very big way of business. Every year this man edited the annual report of the firm of Jahn and Co. and this report was quite as much an annual of ethics as it was a survey of trade all over the world. It was a publication in which an experienced and far-sighted representative of world trade judged and evaluated all that had happened on the markets of the world from the standpoint of the moralist—a moralist who was profoundly convinced that in the last resort ethics and economic interest coincide one with the other.

It was because he held these beliefs that he became interested in my own weekly *Ethische Kultur*, to which in 1897 he contributed a quite incomparable article. It was entitled *Die Kanone als Industriehebel* (The Canon as a Lever of Industry), i.e. as a means of raising it out of a depression. The article in which he proved his point by a whole host of examples taken from international trade, was an annihilating refutation of the doctrine of what came to be known as National Socialism, a doctrine which at that time was being propagated under its very earliest forms

Now it is important that we should set these two types of Jew alongside one another. In both cases they are types of men with world-wide business interests, yet if we compare one with the other, we can clearly discern how very often, when a man loses his religious roots, he completely loses his sense of the

spiritual conditions which form the foundation both of political and economic life.

I have spoken in this chapter of Christian faults by which Jewish faults have been begotten and how by reason of these consequential Jewish faults the Christian faults have been further confirmed. Literature provides us with a figure in which that process is dramatically illustrated, though it is a figure which we should try and put in more exact perspective than is usually done.

Shylock, as he is portrayed in *The Merchant of Venice*, is often regarded as the essential type of the kind of Jew who produces the anti-Semite. The Jew stands upon his bond—so we are told in the play—he insists upon the pound of flesh which that bond secures him, should his debtor default. Those Christians who have got into the habit of disparaging the Jewish law and refuse to acknowledge its majesty, those Christians who themselves are ever seeking to escape from the requirements of law and contract because they misunderstand the nature of that Christian freedom which in reality implies not a lesser adherence to obligation than the Jewish law but one which the spirit has actually made more strict—those Christians, I say, tend to let themselves be misled by the bloody externals of the contract and so misunderstand the nature of that which Shylock defends.

But the “freedom of Christian men”, of which Luther spoke, does not mean that, instead of fulfilling our duties, we are to ignore them: it means much rather that our commitment to justice and right is strengthened from an entirely new side. We must discern this new access of strength in the fact that the man who is renewed through Christ is simply no longer capable of depriving his fellow man of his due—and this not because such action would offend against the seventh commandment, but because he is now concerned with the rights of his fellow men instead of being obsessed with himself.

For the merchant of Venice those things which in the Jewish law are tremendously weighty, possess the lightness of a feather

—and in much the same way all too many Christians who fail to understand the deeper meaning of their own Gospel, look down upon the Old Testament as a thing of no account, though it was quite undeniably the necessary preparation for Christianity; they do not perceive the moral force of Shylock's case when he refuses to sacrifice his contractual rights and desperately clings to his impossible bond. Many who call themselves Pauline Christians have forgotten that without Saul there could have been no Paul. If Christians do not pass through the school of reverence before the law, if they do not understand the spirit of divine justice which speaks to them in the Old Testament, then they will not understand the true significance of the New; they will be spiritually stimulated by St Paul and St John, yet still remain morally rootless and confused—as according to Hölderlin's *Hyperion* was the case with the German abstract idealists.

In Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* there is a clash between the abstract type of the Jew and the completely unconverted type of the so-called Christian. Each confutes the other and each in his turn puts his peculiar bias on display—that is the ultimate meaning of Shakespeare's drama. We may put the matter thus: Shylock desires not merely the execution of his own will, but above all that of the Old Testament which is the Testament of divine justice, that is to say of inflexible right, and it is the majesty of this conception of justice that provides the power and passion with which he proceeds in his cause. Admittedly he presses that cause too far and his unqualified faith in his guiding principle blinds him to the truth that the application of law and justice must be baptized by a higher power which will prevent that same law and justice from mercilessly grinding a fallible human being to pieces. The right of right's own violator exists to check those who would proceed on so narrow a view.

This right indeed is the greatest achievement of the whole idea of justice, for justice itself undergoes a moral breakdown

if it marches on without regarding—be he ne'er so fallible—the living human being under its feet. It is only in Christianity that a knowledge of this truth breaks through. Christianity, when rightly understood, overcomes all temptations to make an idol of the law without thereby impairing the majesty of the moral law which is at the root of the very concept of justice. On the contrary, the saving of the sinner, his protection against sheer crushing annihilation, is the highest corollary of the Decalogue's fifth commandment; but it was only in Christianity that this corollary was clearly perceived; precisely because Christianity's starting-point is the living individual, because Christianity proceeds from the fundamental conditions necessary for his regeneration and not from mere law or an all too summary justice.

For all that, however, the Christian who rejects the obligations of strict justice, because he would-be executor of one of its abstract claims has pressed his cause too far, must be held to have forgotten that the purpose of Christianity is not to destroy the law but rather to proceed from a wholly new set of motives in affirming and fulfilling it.

Aryans and Semites

BEFORE summing up my argument I have one more truth to establish and one more fallacy to explode. They concern the vexed question of race.

Houston Stewart Chamberlain exalted the Aryans as the self-sufficient creators of all truly valuable culture. In doing so, however, he wholly overlooked the danger inherent—because of their one-sided character—in the very virtues with which the Aryans were endowed. There can be no doubt that when Aryans are thrown back entirely on themselves, they tend to get lost either in other-worldly speculation—as with the Indians—or—as with the Greeks—in a beauty-cult. Failing either of these, they tend to lack any ideal purpose whatever in dealing with life and to sink themselves in the pure technics of power. The tragedy that lurks within the Aryan treasury of talent is precisely this separation of the metaphysical and supersensual from the physical.

The spiritual power of the Aryan race which can often be forced up to such a high potential—as we can see among the Indians, the Greeks and in German philosophy—always shows traces of a desire to escape from the world. That is why the Aryan is instinctively reluctant to deal with the concrete problems of life on the principles of his own idealism, but tends all too easily, in his attempts to master circumstances, to rely on the grossest instincts that the battle for survival calls into play. Both aspects of the peril that I have just described can often be discerned in the history of a single people. Thus in Germany

we experienced a period of other-worldly idealism, to be followed almost immediately by a godless deification of the interests of worldly power.

Now it is a very extraordinary thing that the greatest counterpoise to this Aryan split between spirit and life should be found in the peculiar genius of Jewry. Because of this it is only through the conjunction in Christianity of Semitic and Aryan elements that something truly human could come into existence. Naturally I am speaking here of the earthly and cultural foundations of the life of Christianity.

The great gift of the Hebrew people is the all-penetrating consciousness of the presence of God in human life. Here begins that descent of the divine world out of the remote reaches of metaphysics, the fire and the agony engendered when heaven addressed itself to mortal human wills, the hell that derives from a sense of guilt, the contrition for the apostasy, thanks to which God must continually whip men out of their slavery to the dictates of their animal nature. Think only of those words in the Psalm, "If I took the wings of the morning". Is there a greater contrast to that distance of God from man that we find in Aryan thought, than this sense of the ubiquitous presence of God in his searchings for man that we discover among the Jews?

What the Egyptian Sphinx expresses in purely static terms, namely the duality in man with his demonic nature below while above he brings to bear the majestic gaze of a god—what the Egyptian Sphinx thus statically expresses is enacted before us dynamically in the Bible. Here Jacob wrestles with God, here a ladder is set up to heaven, here King Saul calls alternately for his spear and his harp. Here God's elect breaks the bond of wedlock and cries his repentance and his necessity to heaven in psalms with which nothing brought forth in the religious literature of the surrounding peoples can even be compared.

The biggest difference of all, surely, is that between the Hebrew conception of God and the religio-philosophic specula-

tion of the Aryan peoples. The Hebrew spirit seeks the reality of God, not in some remote realm beyond all sensible things, but discovers it everywhere in the guidance discernible in the history of the Hebrew people and in the mysterious connection between its guilt and its disasters. Here is the key to the truth and to the reality of another world. Here we find the historical process conceived as a plan of salvation, leading to the realization of God's rule on earth, a rule the denial of which, through defection from the divine laws, is punished unto the third and fourth generation.

Compare this, for instance, with the historiography of Thucydides which lacks any kind of metaphysical conception of historical events. For the Greeks, indeed, not history but mythology was the proper sphere for encountering Divinity; the world of the gods and the world of earthly happenings were for them two entirely separate things. In its great representatives the Hebrew people experiences its history on an altogether different level from any other nation. It experiences the hidden concatenations between guilt and fate and recognizes the political reality of the moral and spiritual powers. From the observation of history it penetrates to the hidden background of life—and it is this focusing of attention on the ubiquitous presence of God in the concrete destinies of men that gives the quality of greatness to Hebrew metaphysical genius.

It is precisely this that Chamberlain completely misses when he designates the Jewish sense of history as materialism and contrasts it with Aryan spirituality; for in reality we are not here concerned with materialism at all but simply with a different mode of experiencing and co-operating with the action of the Divine Spirit in human life. The profounder qualities of the Jewish historical genius has made the Jews an essentially missionary people—I speak here of the Jewish spirit and not of the modern uprooted Jew—a people which perceived the spiritual foundations of life and society to an incomparably greater degree than any one else. Josephus tells in his *History of the*

Jews how astonished and moved were Pompey and his generals when, after the capture of Jerusalem, they entered the Temple and found no images of gods. Then, we are told, they were filled with the shudder of reverence for an unseen God.

In its great days the Jewish genius was the instrument of prophetic insight into the unseen foundations of life. At the same time it was deeply moved by the longing to make those foundations a vital factor in the actual lives of men and to bring the reality of God into the present world from the world beyond. Judaism has raised this belief in the dependence of our life and actions on spiritual orders to an incomparably lofty level and endowed it with an incomparable consistency. Hosea perfectly expresses this in the words, "I will enter into wedlock with thee in judgement and righteousness, in mercy and compassion". In the story of what other nation was there such a betrothal of the people with the highest law of all human life?

Traditional Judaism shows us the whole difference between mere theology on the one hand and theocracy on the other, the difference, that is to say, between mere teaching about God and God's claim to be the ruler over men's lives. Here the unseen world thrusts mightily into the action of human wills. It is, so to speak, the power of "innervation", of something that takes hold of the whole of life, that turns the religious life of the Jews into a wholly personal relationship with God and, in doing so, radically distinguishes it from Aryan speculation, mythology and philosophy.

This faithful following of God was something that even in Christian times was never lost in the Talmudic development of Jewish religious life. In the orthodox Jewish communities of eastern Europe this supreme sovereignty of Jehovah over the whole of life, and the resulting position of the rabbis and scribes within the community, retained all their old significance. In the worthiest elements of west European Jewry this idea of God's sovereignty never ceased to be effective; it expressed itself in a passionate devotion to social justice and in a receptivity for the

efforts and ideals that made for international co-operation and unity.

It is therefore wholly untrue that the Semitic race represents a disturbing and inhibiting element which hinders the Aryan race in the fulfilment of its peculiar spiritual task. It is much more true to say that the world-historical co-operation between the Aryan and Semitic genius is a matter of the very greatest importance, for it is something that accords with the divine will. All this was completely missed by Chamberlain when he spoke of the part played by the factor of race in the origin and development of Christianity. Christianity in its historical and psychological aspects is certainly not a purely Aryan creation but the result of a reconciliation between Aryan and Semitic spiritual trends.

The contrast between the two constituent elements is too palpable to miss. You have only to compare such a thinker as Fichte, who managed to unite an abstract cult of the spirit with a betrayal of political life to the principles of Machiavelli, with such a man as Isaiah. You will soon see how much the Semitic spirit had to give to the Aryan. Indeed the ideal of the God-Man is only the continuation of the Hebraic sovereignty of God which always tends to carry over the Divine and super-sensual into the real world and so to unite *sapientia* with *virtus*.

The whole history of Christian dogma is therefore not—as Chamberlain seeks to represent it—a continual falsification of Aryan idealism by Semitic materialism, but rather an uninterrupted reconciliation with one another of two world-historical entities, each of which approached the truth from its own point of view. Certainly in Semitic thought there was a dangerous tendency to drag down the supersensual into the sphere of ordinary human history and this was offset—as it was most necessary that it should be—by the powerful drive that continually lifted the Aryan mind to the supersensual level. As against this we can see again and again in Gnosticism and in certain other developments that marked early Christian

thought, that undoubted Aryan tendency to turn Christianity into a mere philosophy and so to rob it of that essential quality expressed in the words *Verbum caro factum est*.

In the writings of St Augustine we can see what a battle was fought by the Christianity of those early days because the very thought of the Incarnation was repugnant to certain minds and this repugnance breaks through to the surface again and again. In this sense Gnosticism was nothing more than the expression of an imperfect combination of the centres of knowledge in the brain with the motor centres. Chamberlain himself was in this respect a typical Gnostic and his overvaluation of pure philosophy is quite unmistakably a part of the same thing. Let us never forget that *Consummatum est* is something immensely greater than "It has been thought".

Conclusion

I CAN hardly conclude a book like this without saying something about the new state of Israel, and yet anything I say on that subject will obviously be inspired by the same thoughts as those which led me to define the conditions under which alone Jewry, in the midst of the realities of the modern world, could succeed in being true to its supreme vocation.

Like most people, I have heard astonishing things about all that has been achieved in Palestine. I have heard how, in circumstances of appalling difficulty, these new pioneers have turned a dried up piece of ground into a new homeland fit for the habitation of human beings. Yet all this can do no more than serve the purpose of recreating the material conditions for a new Israel. By this I mean a Jewish nation which, in the midst of a world concerned almost exclusively with material things, will remain faithful to its historic mission, a Jewish nation, in a word, which will provide within itself the political centre where its religious and ethical vocation will be turned into a lasting reality. If indeed its prophets, past and present, have promised Jewry immortality here upon this earth, that promise surely carries with it the condition that a corresponding perpetuity should attach to the duties which the Jewish nation has undertaken towards the living God.

It is precisely because I am not a Jew, but have nevertheless learned from the study of Jewish history increasingly to prize that very special dedication, that I venture to express this very definite hope. It is that this thing which we can, in the widest

sense, call "the Jewish worship of God" may continue to fulfil its world-historical task, in new forms perhaps but with all its ancient fidelity, and that it may not seek in either its politics or its spiritual life to accommodate itself to a world that has been false to all the religious principles on which political life must repose.

Because of all that I have learnt from Jewry and because of all I know of the modern world, I have one wish which burns within me. It is that the new Israel may have the courage, the strength—and the wisdom—that will enable her to attack her great political task in the spirit of her most ancient traditions and that no shortsightedness of modern political practice may cause her to err or falter in her allegiance to the greatest tradition of them all.

Let me end this work by asking a question, a question of tremendous importance. How can we explain the fact that though Christianity is so closely bound up with the Old Testament and though its greatest apostle came out of the very centre of Jewish history, the Jews for centuries unhesitatingly chose death for themselves, for their wives and for their children, rather than embrace the Christian Faith?

Surely we are confronted here by one of the most profound riddles in the whole of the history of religion? Yet all too many Christians are unaware of the magnitude of this riddle simply because they are ignorant of the full frightfulness of the Jewish martyrdom, a martyrdom extending over more than fifteen hundred years. Let me try and answer that question as simply as I can. I will do so as a modern man whose original background was neither Christian nor Jewish.

I must here touch upon a fault which does not attach to the New Testament itself—as we can see if we study it in its entirety and grasp its deepest significance—but which is surely evident in the manner in which Christians of all ages have delivered their message to the world; for Christians have spoken far too exclusively of the God-Man and said far too little of that which

to Jews was the most precious thing they knew, the very home of their spirit and the essential nucleus of their faith and conscience—I mean that one and only God who created the heavens and the earth and whose eternal law is ever present in the human heart.

We must thus surely ask ourselves whether the immensely tragic enmity between Christian and Jew—a tragedy of which even now we may not have plumbed the final depths—we must, I say, surely ask ourselves whether this enmity with all its vast consequences in the history of the world was really due to nothing more than the stubbornness of the Jew and to his deliberate hardening of his mind against the truth. Should not the fact that this hostility between Christian and Jew has broken out again and again, that the cessation of this warfare has always been more apparent than real and that the problem of ending it has never been mastered, move us to attempt a wholly new approach? May we not sum up the real nature of this estrangement by simply saying that Judaism was made unintelligible to Christians and Christianity to Jews by a series of grave and most disastrous mistakes and that all these mistakes had their origin in one thing—a light-hearted neglect that well nigh passes comprehension, of the indissoluble connection between the Old Testament and the New?

Let us examine these mistakes in a little more detail and see how they arose. First there is the fact that the debate carried on with tradition by the first Christian apostles—who had themselves come out of Jewry—was influenced by a tendency which is really not very difficult to understand—a tendency on the part of the new to set up in opposition to the old and a tendency on the part of the old to resist the new. As a result, the first phase of Christian development was dominated by a conflict between opposing forces rather than by a careful and reverent attempt to reconcile two ways of thinking which were in reality complementary.

Secondly, Christians who had come to the Faith from

paganism seem to have been incapable of understanding how important a thing had been the development of Judaism for the building up of Christian belief. Augustine was here the solitary exception, for he was fully alive to this—as a result of which the representatives of the Greek Church completely failed to understand him. One fateful consequence of this incomprehension was that the Greek Church not only in a most explicit fashion set aside the canon of the Old Testament, but even refused to recognize Augustine, who had done thorough justice to that canon, as a saint.

Thirdly and finally—and here we touch upon the error that has had the gravest consequences of all—the great mass of Christians has not even come near to appreciating the whole ethical and spiritual importance of Judaism or its significance for religion as a whole. Yet it is precisely from this source that they should have learnt to understand the universal significance of Christian truth and its claim to govern political and economic life.

Now we can freely admit all this without for a moment belittling the high and lasting value of all that Christian scholarship has achieved in the field of Old Testament study. The truth is, however, that we are concerned with something quite different, something that can be roughly expressed as follows.

All too many Christians have regarded Judaism as a mere preparation or preliminary phase leading to the Gospels. That they should have prized those Gospels and have been filled by the thought of the wonder of the God-Man we can readily understand. The fact remains however that, though they gratefully quote the Prophets and the Psalms, they have tended to relegate to the background—and that quite disastrously—the most important thing of all: I mean the all-dominating reality of God and the supreme need to make real his laws in human history. Surely there was something wrong about the way in which, to the exclusion of all else, men have placed the God-

Man in the very centre of their faith. I will even venture to say this: There is such a thing as a holy duality, through which alone the Holy Trinity can be rightly understood and seen in the light of a true hierarchical ordering of its constituent elements. This holy duality, however, consists in the absolute inseparability of the Old and the New Testaments. Seen as an event in the history of religion and of the world, God's becoming man was narrowed down too exclusively to the reality of Christ, while the reality of God quite undeniably receded into a background of mere metaphysics.

These are the words of a modern man and they are spoken out of the very depths of his inward experience. They are the words of a man who by the help of the truth of Judaism was able to press forward to Christian belief, a man who at one time, thanks to the excessive isolation of the God-Man, had long experienced very grave religious difficulties. (This excessive isolation is a fault of which all too many Christians have been guilty; it is not a fault, however, of Christian doctrine as formulated by the highest ecclesiastical authority, for the latter has always kept God and the Son of God in their correct relationship.)

It is, therefore, impossible to stress the fact too strongly that the above criticism which applies to all too great a number of Christians, does not apply to the Church herself. Indeed the Church on every conceivable occasion, and as a matter of positive principle, has emphasized the interconnection between the Old Testament and the New. Nay, more, she has declared it ever anew in all her dogmatic utterances. One need only take up the Missal to see how time and again the adoration of God, the Creator of heaven and earth, is moved into the very forefront of things. It is an adoration often couched in the very phrases of the Old Testament itself and often uttered in such lofty language that one is sometimes tempted to believe that the giving of this all-dominating place to the belief in God is actually intended to forestall such errors as may arise from the dan-

gerous practice of making the God-Man too exclusively the centre of one's faith.

Perhaps the circumstance that in the religious world of so very many Christians the figure of God the Father has thus been thrust into the background admits of a very simple explanation. It derives from the psychological fact—a fact with very far-reaching consequences—that in our modern world, which is so very much under the influence of science and technology, such thrusting into the background is a fate suffered—and that to a quite astonishing degree—by all attempts to rise to the highest spiritual cause of things. The attitude behind all this will give place to a very different one when the consequences of turning our culture into a matter of technics, and so robbing its very foundations of their spiritual content, stand clear and unmistakable before us.

To return to the problem of Jewish-Christian relations, the ancient Church, when framing her dogmas and her liturgy, was well aware that the mystery of the God-Man can only remain alive through its perpetual subordination to the highest reality. It can in fact only do so as a part of the all-permeating power of the Creator over his creation and as the ultimate logical effect of that power's exercise.

Anyone who reads what I have just written on the widespread tendency to miss the full vision of the truth by taking too one-sided a view, anyone who then thinks out all the implications of the matter, will surely arrive at one inescapable conclusion. It is that behind the redeemed soul, as the Christian so clearly and so wonderfully conceives it, and behind the effects of such redemption on the individual, there stands—as it must inevitably do—the overriding power of God, and that without the spiritual power that dwells in this highest of orders, and without the reality of that order, even the highest and most perfect development of the human person could have no duration nor could any such person be sure of guidance.

Now this dependence of personal holiness on the immensely real power deriving from faith in God—as that faith is manifested in the Old Testament and in the story of Jewish martyrdom—is something that in the religious development of the West has again and again been quite disastrously underestimated. In the end this was shown all too clearly in the manner in which the Quakers separated the Old Testament from the New and so removed out of the whole system of their religious consciousness something of incomparable ethical delicacy, something fraught with an incomparably strong readiness for sacrifice. The Quakers acted thus in the erroneous belief—held in flat contradiction to the repeated assurances of Christ—that they could deal with the demon in man solely on the principles of the sermon on the Mount. In their reading of what the Gospels tell us about our battle with evil the Quakers have sadly neglected the text that recounts Christ's treatment of the money-changers in the Temple.

This general train of thought leads me to make the following concluding remarks. They concern the spiritual condition of our own time and the weakness in the face of that condition which modern Christians display. On the cause of that weakness I have something to say.

Machiavelli once remarked, "Christianity is a doctrine for sheep in the world full of wolves". Since these words were said the Christian peoples have had ample occasion to follow their implications and to dissociate their own political theory and practice not only from the New Testament but from the divine Law embodied in the old. For what Machiavelli called "sheep's policy" they substituted an even crazier "wolf's policy", nay they even furnished some of the sheep with wolves' teeth and this misguided practice ended up exactly where it might have been expected to end up—in a situation where wolf's policy was quite logically combined with atomic science and where the suicide of the human race can only be prevented by a miracle, a miracle which at the eleventh hour would bring

home to the leading personalities of the world the measure of the madness by which every one of us is threatened with destruction.

Now what is the connection between the prospect that now faces the world and what has been said earlier about the separation of the Old Testament from the New? The answer is simple. The New Testament, when divorced from the Old, was not strong enough to get the better of the demonism in mankind; for is it not true that before that demonism all too many Christians have beaten an impotent retreat, that they never used their authority to intervene in this lunatic affair? Did they not rather withdraw into their "Sunday", so that from there they could comfort a humanity which God appeared to have forsaken with the blessings of the unseen world—leaving the visible world for the Devil to look after?

Surely it is time that we asked this question quite openly: does any one really still dare to believe that the East-West conflict can be resolved, or have its issues clarified, simply by diplomatic conferences? The politics of the world stand beggared of all counsel and that vast gap can only be filled by something which at first sight may seem to have no relation to conventional politics at all but which in reality constitutes the only possible foundation for the relations between one people and another. It can only be filled by the combined wisdom of the Old Testament and the New and by the knowledge of life which they contain.

Instead of our present shortsighted manner of treating men, which has left us helpless and thanks to which we have now attained the terrifying ultimate in political impotence, we need for once to apply the logic of love, as it speaks to us in the New Testament, urgently enjoining us to enter into the difficulties and necessities of our opponents instead of forever moving in a circle about our own selves. Yet our need is no less urgent for the unshakable certitudes of the Old Testament, which teaches us not only to honour the moral law of God as a light from

heaven but to look upon it as the only realistic foundation of practical politics for the whole of human society.

In his *Politische Ethik* the author quotes a saying of Gladstone's to the effect that what is morally wrong can never be politically right. All that has happened in the political history of the world over the past few decades has proved the unqualified truth of this remark and the deadly error of all contrary opinion—and this leads me once more to underline all that has been said in this concluding chapter on this one cardinal point: that if we are to take a stand against all the powers of the human underworld, the New Testament's message of love and the moral realism of the Old Testament with all the greatness of its religious certitude, must be brought to bear against them together.

Whoever has become thoroughly clear in his mind concerning this last will have grasped the timeliness of what I have said in this book when stressing the need for a thorough understanding between Christian and Jew. That understanding, indeed, is the indispensable preliminary to all other understandings and to the resolution of any other conflict, for only thus can the conditions of a lasting peace for the world be ensured.

INDEX

- Abraham, 17
 Adalbert, Bishop of Metz, 100
 Adler, Alfred, 125
 Agriculture and the Jews, 39, 40, 110
 Albrecht of Brandenburg, 79
 Alexander I of Russia, 39
 Alexander II of Russia, 84
 Alexander the Great, 34
 Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, 61
 Ambrose, St, 97
 Anacletus II, Pope, 98
 Apocalypse, the, 133
 Aristotle, 12
 Arius the heresiarch, 28
 Aruch, Schulchan, 72
 Ascher, Rabbi, 113
 Augustine of Hippo, St, 22, 34, 35,
 98, 143, 148
 Auschwitz, 91-92
 Austria and the Jews, 39, 90

 Balzac, Honoré de, 63
 Benedict XIV, Pope, 86
 Bergson, Henri, 24-25
 Bernard of Clairvaux, St, 45, 97-98
 Black Death, the, 60-63, 75
 Bohemia and the Jews, 39
 Bullinger, Heinrich, 76

 Cabbala, The, 72, 109,
 Caiaphas, 21
 Caligula, Emperor, 15-16
 Capistrano, St John of, 62
 Chamberlain, Houston Stewart, 89,
 140, 142-143
 Charles IV, Emperor, 78-79
 Chasidim, sect of the, 29, 105, 115,
 117
 China, 41
 Christ, 12, 18, 21, 22, 29

 Clement VI, Pope, 61
 Commerce and finance and the
 Jews, 38, 40-42, 89, 110, 126
 Conversion, forcible, 58, 66, 68-70,
 82
 "Conversos", 67-68
 Crusades, 57-60, 75

 David, King, 18
 Deification of man, 21-22, 27, 28
 Delitzsch, Franz, 107
 Diaspora, the, 10, 39
 Döllinger, Ignaz, 39, 56

 Egilbert, Bishop of Trèves, 58
 England and the Jews, 60, 71
 Epictetus, 30-31
 Epiphanes, 33-34

 Ferdinand the Catholic, King, 69, 71
 Ferrer, St Vincent, 66
 Finance, *see* Commerce
 France and the Jews, 41, 57, 73
 Frederick I, Emperor, 60, 79
 Frederick II, Emperor, 80
 Freytag, Gustav, 127

 Gabirol, Salomon ben, 24-25, 65
 Germany and the Jews, vii-ix, 7, 35
 40, 58-59, 62, 73, 80, 129-134
 Gandhi, 8
 Ghettos, 40-41, 79, 86-89
 Gladstone, W. E., 153
 Gnosticism, 142-143
 Godfrey of Bouillon, 59
 Goethe, J. W. von, 35, 77-78
 Greece and the Jews, 33-34, 35, 140

- Gregory the Great, Pope, 98
 Gregory of Nazianzus, St, 28-29
- Hachassid, Jehuda, 115, 117
 Haggada, the, 108-109
 Hai, Rabbi, 112
 Halevy, Yehudi, 65
 Hallacha, the, 108
 Harden, Maximilian, 130
 Heilman (deputy), 130
 Henry IV, Emperor, 57, 79
 Hermann, Bishop of Cologne, 59
 Historical vision of Jewry, 140
 Hitler, Adolf, 90, 129
 Holderlin, J. C. F., 136
 Holland and the Jews, 71
 Hosea, 141
 Hungary and the Jews, 39, 59
- Incarnation, doctrine of the, 18, 19,
 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30-32, 105
 Innocent II, Pope, 99
 Innocent III, Pope, 80, 81
 Israel, modern State of, 145-146
 Isserles, Rabbi, 47, 112
 Italy and the Jews, 41
- Jechiel ben Jekutiel ben Benjamin,
 113
 Jerome, St, 35
 Jerusalem, 9, 13, 33, 34, 36-37, 127,
 141
 Job, 29
 Johannsen, Bishop of Speyer, 58
 Josephus, 13-17, 127, 140
 Judas Maccabeus, 34
 Justin Martyr, 35
- Kant, Immanuel, 23
 Kastein, Josef, 33, 67, 69, 70, 73, 82
 Kierkegaard, Soren, 35
 Koch, Erich, 93
- Lambert of Hersfeld, 45
 Leiningen, Count Emicha von, 59
 Leo XIII, Pope, 101
- Liberal Judaism, 72-73
 Lipman, Rabbi, 115
 Lombards as bankers, 46
 Lombrose, Cesare, 39
 Louis X of France, 77
 Ludwig IV, Emperor, 78
 Ludwig of Brandenburg, 62
 Luther, Martin, 76, 99, 100, 112, 135
- Maccabeus, Judas, 34
 Machiavelli, Niccolò, 151
 Maimonides (Moses ben Maimon),
 65, 72
 Maimonides, Solomon, 109, 113-115
 "Marranos", 68, 69, 71
 Martinez, Archdeacon of Seville, 66
 May, R. E., 134
 Mayer, Sigmund, 87
 Midrash, 109
 Moors in Spain, 64-66
 Moravia and the Jews, 39
 Moses, 127
 Müller-Claudius, 92
 Mussar literature, 117, 118
- Nathan the prophet, 18
 Nathan, Rabbi, 110
 National Socialist or Nazi movement
 (see also Germany), 75, 90-94, 134
 Nicaea, Council of, 45
 Nicholas II of Russia, 85
- Origen, 98
 Orthodox Church and the Jews, 82,
 148
- Papas, Rabbi, 110
 Papacy (see also individual popes), 75,
 80
 Paul, St, 13, 98, 101
 Petronius (Roman general), 15, 16
 Philip the Fair, 76, 77
 Pilate, Pontius, 13, 14
 Pilz, Hans H., 92
 Pius XI, Pope, 101, 102
 Plato, 35
 Poland and the Jews, 84-86

- Portugal and the Jews, 64, 69-71
 Poverty of European Jews, 49
 Protestantism, 90
 Psycho-analytic approach to religion,
 23; to Anti-Semitism, 54
 Psychology, Jewish, 125

 Quakers, 151

 Richard I of England, 59
 Ritual murder, Jews accused of, 80
 Rohling, Professor, 107
 Rolland, Romain, 130
 Roman power and the Jews, 13-17,
 36, 41
 Roscher, Wilhelm, 50
 Rudhard, Archbishop of Mayence,
 59
 Rupert of Bavaria, 78
 Russell of Liverpool, Lord, 91
 Russia and the Jews, 39, 40, 82, 84,
 85, 92-94

 Sacrilege, Jews accused of, 75,
 80-81, 85
 Saul, King, 18
 Schleiden, M. J., 54
 Schopenhauer, Arthur, 23
 Sex, Jewish views on, 113, 114
 Shylock, 135, 136
 Sixtus III, Pope, 69
 Solomon ben Moses ben Jekutiel,
 112

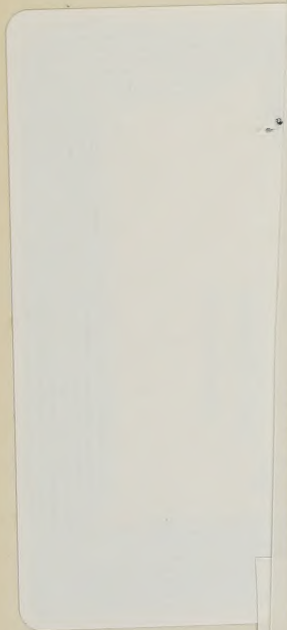
 Soloviev, Vladimir, 103, 104, 124
 Sombart, Werner, 42, 43, 50, 113
 Spain and the Jews, 24, 55, 64-69,
 72-74
 Spener, Professor Jacob, 100, 101
 Spinoza, Benedict, 112
 Stephen, Pope, 99
 Switzerland and the Jews, 61, 62

 Talmud, the, and Talmudic learn-
 ing, 105-112, 114-117, 126, 141
 Tam, Rabbi Jacob, 47
 Theodosius, Emperor, 97
 Tiberius, Emperor, 13
 Titus, Emperor, 36, 37
 Toledo, Council of, 56
 Tolstoy, Leo, 49
 Torah, the, 72
 Torquemada, 69
 Trent, Council of, 101
 Trinity, doctrine of the Holy, 22, 24,
 25, 28
 Turkey and the Jews, 71

 United States, Jews in the, 41
 Usury, 42-50, 56, 77, 120

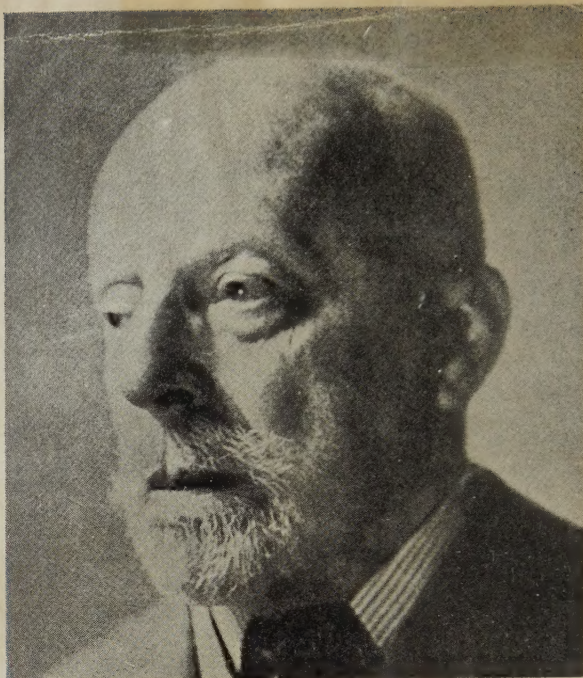
 Varnhagen, Rachel von, 129
 Vespasian, Emperor, 36

 Zutra, Rabbi Mar, 110



THE AUTHOR

Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster



was born in Berlin in 1869 and grew up in the liberal tradition of Goethe and Humboldt to which his father, a famous director of the Berlin observatory, belonged. As a young graduate and secretary of the "Society for Ethical Freedom", Foerster, although not a socialist himself, defended the Social Democrats against the attacks of the Emperor and was sentenced to a period of imprisonment for libelling the sovereign. His university career in Prussia at an end, he went to Zurich, Vienna and later to Munich where, as professor of philosophy and pedagogy, he became famous. Inspired by English and American conceptions of democracy and federalism, his political and social teaching made him prominent and during the First World War he exerted his international influence for a just peace and later as Bavarian ambassador in Berne did much to help his defeated country. He was soon attacked by extreme nationalists and to escape assassination left Germany in 1920. From Switzerland he continued to warn the German people against the growth of totalitarianism and his books were burned by the Nazis in 1933 together with those of his friends, Einstein and Martin Buber. In 1940 he escaped from Hitler's armies to France and later to the United States where he now lives and works. A Protestant, Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster played a notable part in increasing understanding between Catholics and Protestants and Jews.

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